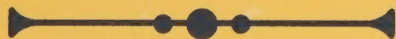


Julius Weis Friend



# THE DOUBLE DEALER




Vol. 1

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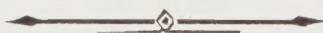




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# THE DOUBLE DEALER

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JANUARY, 1921

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## AND EPIGRAMS

All contributions should be addressed to the Editors of *The Double Dealer*, 204  
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# THE DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

In November 1693 Master William Congreve's comedy, "The Double Dealer," made its debut before an assemblage of the beaux and belles of Restoration London, the beauty and wit of the court of William III. *January, 1921, The Double Dealer plays again.* On this occasion it takes the form of a monthly magazine, but its appeal once more is to that select audience for whom romance and irony lie not so many leagues apart; whose veneration for art, music, and letters, is not so solemn that it cannot be lightened by a sense of humor; whose opinions of society, economics, and politics are drawn, not from the perusal of dusty books, but rather from the vision of tolerant eyes estimating the devious ways of the world.

## HONESTY AND THE DOUBLE DEALER

**H**ONESTY is the best policy," said Benjamin Franklin, the prototype of one hundred per cent. Americanism. But when Franklin wrote that he was making a confession, he was telling the truth about the citadels of power, a dangerous practice and one hardly in vogue since Machiavelli babbled in exile four hundred years ago.

Today these words are slyly changed into the motto, "*Honesty is our policy*," which screams from every bazaar in the market-place. Each man now marches in the procession of the righteous wearing the monotonous mask of integrity. Yet they do not pass unrecognized. Ever and anon the mask slips for a minute and we glimpse strangely familiar faces, we seem to remember them about the Scaean Gates, on the plains

of Troy, "advancing true friends, and beating back alien foes," bartering mercy for gold; in a crowded courtroom of Athens, intent on doing to death Socrates for being nobler than they, listening courteously to his plea with stopped ears; in an inner chamber of the Vatican trafficking in assassination and chicanery with the Borgias. The play is interminable in its acts; and the persons of the drama are still the band of cut-purses, thimbliggers, and their following, that men call The World—age old and ageless.

So, Honesty remains only the best policy. However, if the grapes of true honesty hang forever beyond our baffled reach, most of us, at least, work in the shadow of the vine. There is an elastic line which we indifferently toe. Hamlet called himself "indifferent honest"; nearly all could sing refrain. Certainly there are those whose delight it is to play hop-scotch with the line of demarkation, teasing more timid souls with a "now I'm outside, now I'm inside." And those there are who range outside the margin altogether, the daredevils of the world, who must draw danger with every breath and are necessarily mad when measured by the safety-first yard-stick. What awed us about Ponzi was not the dishonesty of the hoax but the man's brobdingnagian brass.

But, heigh-ho, you say, what has all this to do with *The Double Dealer*, this unchanging depravity and this timorousness of human nature? Here is the answer. *The Double Dealer* is concerned with this human nature, the raw stuff, cleared of the myths of glamor-throwers and Utopia-weavers, casting off the

spell of "all the drowsy syrups of the world." We mean to deal double, to show the other side, to throw open the back windows stuck in their sills from disuse, smutted over long since against even a dim beam's penetration. To myopics we desire to indicate the hills, to visionaries the unwashed dishes; we will figure to you the pathos of a fop in an orphan asylum, the absurdity of an unselfish reformer. We expect to be called Radical by Tory and Reactionary by Red. But we remain only ourselves who can "deceive them both by speaking the truth," and, as the honestest soul amongst you, we ask you in the mysteries of your subterranean retorts to drain a beaker of the forbidden juice of the fruit to—THE DOUBLE DEALER.

#### AXES ON EDGE

**W**HEN *The Double Dealer* was in the embryo, a handful of people who were impressed by the sincerity of the project, expressed a little abhorrence at the name. Coming from such upstanding members of society as we, and topping a sheet to be read by such intelligent people as they, it was not at all nice; it suggested horrible things like scandal, blackmail, and "radical propaganda." Plainly, they were mistaken. The apparitions they had conjured up do not rattle their bones, in the first issue, at least. We did not, however, share their anxiety; we are still *The Double Dealer*, and with all deference to the kind individuals who helped us forward, utterly out of sympathy with the rule book.

Like any artistic venture, *The Double Dealer* is the conception of a few men who share the same prejudices as well as the same tolerance. You need not expect to find in these pages, sympathy for presto change reforms,

nor for syndicates for the propagation of brotherly love. You will be squandering your patience to look for gladness—Pollyanna style—or the muddled sentimentality born of an increasing purse and an uncreasing cerebrum; it will avail you not at all to search for an unground ax, a moral purpose, a political affiliation.

But inversely, if you can agree with Schopenhauer that when man was made, the Creator did not use both hands; scoff with Voltaire at the idea of this best of all possible worlds; touch hands with Mark Twain in his aphorism as to a sense of humor being man's only adequate weapon; if you are envious of Cabell who can indulge in illusions and then shrug them off; if you nod your head with the old preacher of Ecclesiastes but see no necessity to get excited about it—*The Double Dealer* is for you—and you are for it.

It is fitting that for the initial number, we should be able to include the name of Lafcadio Hearn. New Orleans is one of the cities that claims as her own, this strangely cosmopolitan man stemming from Ireland and Greece, tarrying with us a while before plunging into the Orient never to return. "*Night Born*," fascinated by whatever was archaic and exotic, by what Nietzsche terms, '*the pathos of distance*,' he clung to his chimeras and fancies as the real-est things in an evaporating world of vaunted reality. Almost ignored during his sojourn here and scorned by literary clubs and recalcitrant professors, he stands today with Pater and Lamb in the sanctuary of those who love the art of flawless craftsmanship for its own sake. It is with some self-preening that we point to "The Last of the New Orleans Fencing Masters" in this issue.



## THE DOUBLE DEALER

There was a time when the fame of New Orleans was based for the most part on gin-fizzes and brothels. Now that the all-wise legislators have thrown these things on the ash-heap, there is, happily, something else which appears to be placing us apart from those drab cities of soda-fountains and Sunday laws. We refer to the spirit that is now supporting the concerts, the lectures, the art associations, the Bridle-goose Club, Le Petit Theatre, and in the Quarter, the various clubs and coteries whose apparent purpose it is to nourish the traditions of the old ground. To be sure, we are not spellbound with the illusion that such things usually carry; we know well that part of the artistic audiences are but figures in the social world, and a great many of the dilettantes who grace the studio firesides mere tea drinkers of a virulent type; but, let drone and bumble bee hum, so that there be within the hive a scantling of honey.

Our plan for the present is to print one short story each month, essays, reviews, sketches, epigrams and sundry observations on the human animal as celestial aspirant and strap-hanger. Such writers as Mr. Benjamin De Casseres, who allows himself to be styled a romantic pessimist, can give you both. He says of his "Psychometric Reporter," the first part of which appears in this issue: "This is not romantic pessimism, but romantic humbug which is better still." Later we hope to show Mr. De Casseres in other moods and let our readers say which they prefer.

In these sheets will be buhddled strange bedfellows—grand names which may be 'writ in water,' unknowns who may be chiselling their mark in adamant. In this selection, we do not pretend to the discrimination of time.

Within our limited judgement, we shall present the best material we can muster.

In verse our concern will not be with the skeleton, the form, but the marrow within. Consequently we shall tilt no crazy lance for free verse, or *vers libre*, as its excited champions prefer to term it. We shall print it if it be well written together with the rhymed sonnet, rondeau, ballade, and villanelle.

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### THE DOUBLE DEALER

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"...I CAN DECEIVE THEM BOTH  
BY SPEAKING THE TRUTH."

---

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# A Word from James Branch Cabell

NOVEMBER

30

1920

Editors of The Double Dealer.

Gentlemen:

Your program, as announced, is ambitious and mellifluous and generally attractive, with perhaps the minor fault of being a trifle beyond the scope of human ability. But that, as touches literary endeavor anyhow, is errancy on the right side.

I do not know how any personal benevolence toward an as yet unpublished magazine can well be voiced save with a formal wish for all imaginable success well merited; this much, however, one may desire for you most heartily. From actual criticism the unborn share with the dead in exemption (although because of, to be sure, more cheery and less immutable reasons), so that, in either case, the bystander's rôle can only be that of tacit hopefulness. The Double Dealer, after all, is committed to sink or swim by virtue of its own inherent virtues. Such was metaphor of the prologue to your Congrevean namesake, you will remember, nor can I imagine any more true and tonic avowal as herald for the second Double Dealer's outset.

Therefore I wish you all the luck you may deserve, in friendly confidence that your merits may thus add up to some quite unexampled prosperity.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES BRANCH CABELL.

Dumbarton Grange,  
Dumbarton, Virginia.

## MR. CABELL OF VIRGINIA

WE do not think that Mr. James Branch Cabell of Dumbarton Grange, Dumbarton, Virginia, needs any introduction to the country at large, despite the belated and crotchety presentation of a Mr. Gunther in the

November *Bookman*, but we do think that our friends hereabout are as yet unaware of his topping presence in the field of American letters.

Mr. Cabell's art is, at once, so individual and various that we, for our part, should be diffident about either appreciating or criticising it. The

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

afore-mentioned Mr. Gunther however, after saying that "he (Cabell) manifestly has limitations, his style being frequently annoying, often verbose, his vocabulary *impossible*, concludes by stating that "Cabell is a stylist of distinction, a painter of beautiful images, a suave, a subtle ironist. We have a juggler of ideas, a nimble wit, a skeptical and tolerant philosopher. We have a queer, tricksy, and deft craftsman who tells his story well." And he winds up by calling him "the most interesting figure in American letters." Mr. Walpole in the *Yale Review*, Messrs. Rascoe, Hergesheimer, Benjamin de Casseres and H. L. Mencken, have all, with more or less excellent discrimination appraised Mr. Cabell's craftsmanship. Nevertheless, we believe that no present appraisal can be made of a man who is not writing either for or about the present. His material is from all time and his art for all time. Fifty years hence some longheaded, spectacled gentleman may be positioned for a fitting estimate of the Cabell phenomenon in the early twentieth century. In the meanwhile let us make ourselves merry with the enjoyment of his books.

As this is scrivined merely for the purpose of stimulating a keener interest in the Cabellian product we shall begin by suggesting that you first read "The Cream of the Jest" partly because it contains some of the author's finest writing, verve, feeling, and the seed of his latter style; and partly because it is more easily obtained at present having been reissued recently. Next we would commend the perusal of "Gallantry" (Harper's 1907). Mr. Cabell, we understand, is revising the book. The romance and delicate irony of "Gallantry" to one reader at least is exquisite. Then, perhaps, "The Certain Hour," a series of striking episodes in the lives of divers

poets. Either "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck" or "The Soul of Melicent (revised under the title "Domnei") might follow. And, then, "Beyond Life!" And then "Jurgen!"

If you can wade through the sands and shallows of the very early books, such as "The Eagle's Shadow" and "The Line of Love" out into the white-capped ocean of "Beyond Life" and "Jurgen" and manage, somehow, to swim, float, or fly with the author, your efforts will not be entirely unrewarded. The ocean of life and beyond life—romance, legend, illusion, irony—the medley of gust and love and laughter and tears, with a fine courage back of it all facing inevitable defeat at the last—a sad yet buoyant hopefulness whistling a droll second to the obligato of the Gods!

We quote from "Beyond Life:"—"For thus to spin romances is to bring about, in every sense, man's recreation, since man alone of animals can, actually, acquire a trait by assuming, in defiance of reason, that he already possesses it. To spin romances is, indeed, man's proper and peculiar function in a world wherein he only of created beings can make no profitable use of the truth about himself. For man alone of animals plays the ape to his dreams. So he fares onward chivalrously, led by *ignes fatui* no doubt, yet moving onward. And that the goal remains ambiguous seems but a trivial circumstance to any living creature who knows, he knows not how, that to stay still can be esteemed only a virtue in the dead."

Continuing we read: "Indeed, when I consider the race to which I have the honor to belong, I am filled with respectful wonder. All about us flows and gyrates unceasingly the material universe,—an endless inconceivable jumble of rotatory blazing gas and

## MR. CABELL OF VIRGINIA

frozen spheres and detonating comets, wherethrough spins Earth like a frail midge. And to this blown molecule adhere what millions and millions and millions of parasites just such as I am, begetting and dreaming and slaying and abnegating and toiling and making mirth, just as did aforetime those countless generations of our forebears, every one of whom was likewise a creature just such as I am! \* \* \*

"Nor is this everything. For my reason, such as it is, perceives this race in its entirety, in the whole outcome of its achievement, to be beyond all word-ing petty and ineffectual! and no more than thought can estimate the relative proportion to the material universe of our poor Earth, can thought conceive with what quintillionths to express that fractional part which I, as an individual parasite, add to Earth's negligible fretting by ephemerae."

"And still—behold the miracle!—still I believe life to be a personal transaction between myself and Omnipotence; I believe that what I do is somehow of importance; and I believe that I am on a journey toward some very public triumph not unlike that of the third prince in the fairytale."

Here are but two passages, perhaps ill-chosen ones, from a book abounding in quotable matter. In "Jurgen" the wealth of wit and well-turned phrasing make it a difficult task to select an apt paragraph. Space is limited, and one must take the pains and the accompanying pleasure to read an author of the Cabell stamp, however in concluding we glean you a bit from this remarkable book. Here is Jurgen confronted by the brown man with the queer feet, the symbol of All, who states indifferently that he may choose to annihilate him.

Says Jurgen: "None the less, I think there is something in me which will en-

dure. I am fettered by cowardice, I am enfeebled by disastrous memories; and I am maimed by old follies. Still, I seem to detect in myself something which is permanent and rather fine. Underneath everything, and in spite of everything, I really do seem to detect that something. What role that something is to enact after the death of my body, and upon what stage, I cannot guess. When fortune knocks I shall open the door. Meanwhile, I tell you candidly, you brown man, there is something in Jurgen far too admirable for any intelligent arbiter ever to fling into the dustheap. I am, if nothing else, a monstrous clever fellow; and I think I shall endure somehow. Yes, cap in hand goes through the land, as the saying is: and I believe I can contrive some trick to cheat oblivion when the need rises, says Jurgen, trembling, and gulping, and with his eyes shut tight, but even so, with his mind quite made up about it. Of course you may be right; and certainly I cannot go so far as to say you are wrong: but still at the same time"—

"Now but before a fool's opinion of himself, the brown man cried the Gods are powerless. Oh, yes, and envious, too!"

---

'Tis gallant sparkling Greek wine,  
now for God's sake, sweetheart, do but  
teach me how the devil you make it.—  
*Rabelais.*

---

### THE SMILE

I sought a meaning  
For your smile  
As of Leonardo's Lady.

Could it have meant  
I was a fool?

LOUIS GILMORE

## The Last of the New Orleans Fencing Masters

**Note**—An unique chapter in the romantic history of New Orleans was contributed by Lafcadio Hearn some thirty-five years ago to the *Southern Bivouac* of Louisville, soon after defunct, which we here reprint.

This item, for some reason, has escaped the eyes of the several editors who have industrially dug out from various periodicals and journals, vagrant matter of this now highly appreciated littérateur. No collected volume, so far as we know, of the many posthumous publications contains this very interesting example of Lafcadio Hearn done in his best style.

The character of Llulla, fifty years ago, was a well-known celebrity of the Vieux Carré and in his old age ran a cemetery on Louisa Street, where he held court in the matters of the *code duello* dispensing service before or after as required.

### I.

**S**ENOR Don José Llulla, or Pepe Llulla, as he is more affectionately styled by his admirers, is a person whose name has become legendary even in his life-time. While comparatively few are intimate with him, for he is a reserved man, there is scarcely a citizen who does not know him by name, and hardly a New Orleans urchin who could not tell you that "Pepe Llulla is a great duelist who has a cemetery of his own." Although strictly true, this information is apt to create a false impression of some connection between Pepe's duels, and Pepe's necropolis; the fact being that none of his enemies repose in the Louisa-street cemetery, which he owns, and that he has never killed enough men to fill a solitary vault. There is, in short, no relationship between the present and the past occupations of the cemetery proprietor; but before speaking of the former, I may attempt to give a brief outline of the

career of this really extraordinary character who won his way to fortune and to fame by rare energy and intrepidity.

Pepe was born near Port Mahon, capital of Minorca, one of those Balearic Islands whose inhabitants were celebrated in antiquity for their skill in the use of missile-weapons, and have passed under so many dominations—Carthaginian, Roman, Vandal, Moorish, Spanish, French, and English. His own uncommon dexterity in the use of arms, however, does not appear due to any physical inheritance from ancient Balearic forefathers, as he traces back his family to a Moorish origin. This assertion, in view of Pepe's chestnut hair and bluish-gray eyes, would seem untenable unless we reflect that those desert horsemen who first invaded Spain in the cause of Islam were mostly Berbers, kindred of the strange nomads who still preserve their fair skins and blue eyes under the sun of the Sahara—the "Veiled People," who are known afar off by their walk, "long and measured, like the stride of the ostrich." I can not say that Pepe is really a Berber; but he possesses physical characteristics which harmonize well with the descriptions in Henri Duveyrier's "*Les Toureg du Nord*"; and Southern Louisiana is full of surprises for the ethnographer. The photograph, which obtained so much celebrity, was taken more than fifteen years ago, and Pepe has but slightly changed since then. He is only a little grayer, and remains very erect, agile, and elastic in his movements; a man about the average height, rather vigorously than powerfully built. He attributes his excellent physical preser-



vation to his lifelong abstinence. No liquor ever passed his lips, and his nerves still retain the steadiness of youth.

Pepe's imagination was greatly impressed during early boyhood by the recitals of sailors who used to visit his father's home at Port Mahon; and his passion for the sea became so strong as he grew older that it required constant vigilance to keep him from joining some ship's crew by stealth. Finally, when an American captain—John Conkling, of Baltimore, I believe—made known in Port Mahon that he wanted an intelligent Spanish lad on his vessel, Pepe's parents deemed it best to allow their son to ship as cabin-boy. He remained several years with the captain, who became attached to him, and attempted to send him to a school to study navigation, in the hope of making a fine sailor of him. But the boy found himself unable to endure the constraints of study; ran away and shipped as a common seaman. He went with whalers to the antarctic zone, and with slavers to the West African coast, and after voyaging in all parts of the world, entered the service of some merchant company whose vessels plied between New Orleans and Havana. At last he resolved to abandon the sea, and to settle in New Orleans in the employ of a Spaniard named Biosca, proprietor of a ballroom and café. Being a very sinewy, determined youth, Pepe was intrusted with the hazardous duty of maintaining order; and, after a few unpleasant little experiences, the disorderly element of the time recognized they had found a master, and the peace of Biosca's establishment ceased to be disturbed.

Pepe soon began to visit the popular fencing-schools of New Orleans. He was already a consummate master in

the use of the knife (what thoroughbred Spaniard is not?) but he soon astonished the best *Tireurs* by his skill with the foils.

At that time fencing was a fashionable amusement. It was the pride of a Creole gentleman to be known as a fine swordsman. Most of the Creole youths educated in Paris have learned the art under great masters; but even these desired to maintain their skill by frequent visits to the Salles d'Armes at home. Indeed, fencing was something more than a mere amusement; it was almost a necessity. In New Orleans, as Paris, the passions of society were regulated if not restrained by the duel; and the sword was considered the proper weapon with which gentlemen should settle certain disputes. But the custom of dueling prevailed in New Orleans to an extent unparalleled in France since the period of the Revolution. Creole society in Louisiana was an aristocratic and feudal organization based upon slavery. Planters and merchants lived and reigned like princes; the habit of command and the pride of power developed characters of singular inflexibility; passions, tropicalized under this strong sun of ours, assumed a violence unknown in calmer France and the influences of combined wealth and leisure aided to ferment them. Three or four duels a day were common; this number was often exceeded; and the young men seemed anxious to fight for the mere ferocious pleasure of fighting. A friend tells me this queer reminiscence of the old *régime*: "A party of young Creoles, slightly flushed with wine, are returning from an evening entertainment. The night is luminous and warm; the air perfumed with breath of magnolias; the sward is smooth, level, springy as an English turf. Suddenly one of the party stops, feels the sod with his

foot, and, leaping nearly to his own height, vociferates, *'quel lieu pour se battre!'* (What a place for a fight!) His enthusiasm proves contagious; a comrade proposes that the party shall take all possible advantage of the situation. Sword-play begins, at first jestingly; then some fencer loses his temper, and the contest all at once becomes terribly earnest, to end only with the death of several participants."

The demand for fencing-masters was amply supplied by foreigners and also by some local experts, *Maitres d'Armes* whose names are now remembered only by a very few venerable citizens. The most celebrated were L'Alouette, an Alsatian; Montiasse, also an Alsatian and Napoleonic veteran; Cazerès, of Bordeaux; Baudoin, of Paris; the two brothers Rosière, of Marseilles; Dauphin, a famous expert (killed at last in a shot-gun duel which he had recklessly provoked). Behind these fading figures of the past, three darker ghosts appear: Black Austin, a free negro, who taught the small-sword; Robert Severin a fine mulatto, afterward killed in Mexico, and Basile Croquere (I am not sure that I spell the name correctly), also a mulatto, and the most remarkable colored swordsman of Louisiana. Those of my readers who have not seen Vigeant's beautiful little book, *"Un Maître d'Armes Sous la Restauration,"* may perhaps be surprised to learn that the founder of the modern French school of swordsmanship, and the greatest swordsman of this century, was a mulatto of San Domingo, that famous Jean Louis, who in one terrible succession of duels, occupying only forty minutes, killed or disabled thirteen master-fencers of that Italian army pressed into service by Napoleon for his Peninsular campaign.

## II.

It was under L'Alouette that Pepe principally studied; and the fencing-master, finding after a time that his pupil excelled him, appointed him his *prevôt* or assistant. In a succession of subsequent encounters the young man proved that, though he might have one or two rivals with the foils, he had no real superior among the *Maitres d'Armes*. Then he began to study the use of other varieties of weapons; the saber, with which he became the most expert perhaps in the South; the Broad-sword with which he afterward worsted more than one accomplished English teacher. With the foil, which is only a training weapon and allows of a closer play, fine fencers have been able to make some good points with him but with the rapier or small sword he was almost invulnerable. With firearms his skill was not less remarkable. Pepe's friends were accustomed to hold a dollar in their fingers or a pipe between their teeth for him to shoot at. Twenty years ago he would often balance an egg on the head of his little son, and invariably break the shell with a Colt-ball at the distance of thirty paces; with a rifle he seldom failed to hit any small object tossed in the air, such as a ball, a cork, or a coin.

L'Alouette and his pupil became very warm friends; their intimacy was only once chilled by an unfortunate accident. At a time when the bowie-knife was still a novel arm in New Orleans, L'Alouette insisted upon a public contest with Llulla, the weapons to be wooden bowies with hickory blades. Pepe had no equal, however, in the use of a knife of any sort; and L'Alouette, finding himself repeatedly touched and never able to make a point, lost his temper and made a violent assault on

the young Spaniard, who, parrying the thrust countered so heavily that the fencing-master was flung senseless to the floor with two ribs fractured. But the friendship of the two men was renewed before long, and continued until L'Alouette's death several years later. Llulla, in whose arms he died, succeeded his teacher, not only of fencing, but also of the use of fire-arms. He did not, indeed teach the knife, but he has often given surprising proofs of his skill with it. A gentleman who is quite expert with most weapons, told me that after having succeeded in persuading Pepe to have a sham contest with him only a few years ago, he received the point of Pepe's mock weapon directly in the hollow of his throat almost at the very first pass, and was repeatedly struck in the same place during five or six vain efforts to make a point. None of the serious contests in which Pepe has engaged lasted more than a few moments; he generally disabled his adversary at the very outset of the encounter.

Although remunerative in those days, the profession of fencing-master did not suit Llulla's energetic character. He kept his *Salle d'Armes*, but hired assistants, and only devoted so much of his own time to teaching as could be spared from more practical duties. He had already laid down the foundation of his fortune, had brought out from Minorca his mother and brother, had married, and commenced to do business on his own account. Few men have attempted as many different things as he has with equal success. He built slaughter-houses and speculated in cattle; he bought up whole fleets of flatboats and sold the material for building purposes (working all day up to his waist in water, and never getting sick in consequence); he bought land on the other side of the river and built cottages upon

it; he built a regular Spanish bull-ring and introduced bull fights; he bought a sawmill and made it pay, and finally purchased the Louisa-street cemeteries, after accumulating a capital of probably several hundred thousand dollars. During the war he remained faithful to the Union, declaring that he could not violate his oath of allegiance to the United States. After the war he bought the island of Grande Terre, in the Gulf (excepting, of course, the government reservation on which Fort Livingston and the Barataria Light-house are situated) a wild, wind-swept place, to which cattle from neighboring islands sometimes swim in spite of the sharks. In summer it is a fine pleasure resort for sea-bathers, and Pepe could never wholly separate himself from the sea.

During all those years Pepe kept his fencing school, but rather as a recreation than as a money-making establishment. He is now the last of the old fencing-masters, and although he has practically retired from public life will not refuse to instruct (*gratis*) pupils introduced to him by personal friends. For nearly half a century he was the confidant and trainer of New Orleans duellists, and figured as second in more than a hundred encounters. The *duello* is now almost obsolete in the South; and Creole New Orleans is yielding in this respect to the influences of Americanization. It is fully three years since Pepe's services were last called into requisition.

While his formidable reputation as an expert often secured him against difficulties and dangers to which another in his position would have been exposed, it did not save him from the necessity of having some twenty or more affairs of his own. In half a score of these affairs his antagonists weakened at the last moment, either apolo-



## THE WINE DEALER

[illegible]

year nationalities may not meet here at his home after having placed him under the necessity of killing it if being killed. In none of his times, even at the time when the time appeared necessary was he motivated by other motives than friendship or pride and the only job he would ever accept from the man whose part he assumed was a wage of some sort. But his admirers have taught him as well in this respect that he now possesses a perfect freedom in doing all kinds, not only of sports but of other people's revenues, games, business, etc. which forms quite a community in itself. Since the war Pope has had in personal difficulties except those assumed in the cause of Spanish patriotism but these affairs first made him really famous and from the most interesting incidents of his singular

1914.

## IL

After having long been the headquarters of the Cuban filibusters, New Orleans was violently convulsed in 1853, by the fate of the Lopez expedition, and serious outbreaks occurred, for the remains of which the Spanish government subsequently demanded and obtained satisfaction from the United States. It was Pepe Lluïa who at that time saved the Spanish Consul's life, by getting him out of the city safely to the plantation of a compatriot. Pepe's own life was then menaced; and though none ventured to attack him in broad daylight, his determination and courage alone saved him from several night-attempts at assassination. After the Lopez riots the anti-Spanish fury died down to be revived again in 1869 by another Cuban tragedy. But in 1869 the United States garrison was strong, and there was no serious rioting. The rage of the Cuban revolutionaries vented itself only in



placards, in sanguinary speeches, in cries of *death to Spain!* and in a few very petty outrages upon defenseless Spaniards. Pepe Llulla challenged one of the authors of the outrages, who, failing to accept, was placarded publicly as a coward.

Then he resolved to take up the cause of Spain in his own person, and covered the city with posters in English, in French, and in Spanish, challenging all Cuban revolutionaries, either in the West Indies or the United States. This challenge was at first accepted by a number, but seemingly by men who did not know the character of Llulla, for these Cuban champions failed to come to time, a few declaring they respected Pepe too much to fight him; yet at the same time a number of efforts were made to assassinate him—some by men who seemed to cross the Gulf for no other purpose. Fortunately for himself Pepe has always proved an uncommonly hard man to kill; moreover, he had become so accustomed to this sort of danger that it was almost impossible to catch him off his guard. Even gangs bold enough to enter his house or place of business had been terribly handled; and a party of seven drunken soldiers who once attempted to wreck his establishment left five of their number *hors de combat*, felled by an iron bar. Again, a Mexican, who had hidden behind a door to attack Llulla with a knife, had his weapon wrested from him and was severely beaten for his pains. The Cuban emissaries and others fared no better in 1860. Two men, who concealed themselves in the cemetery at dusk, were unexpectedly confronted with Pepe's pistols, and ordered to run for their lives, which they proceeded to do most expeditiously, leaping over tombs and climbing over walls in their panic. Another party of ruffians met the

Spaniard at his own door in the middle of the night, and were ingloriously routed. Once more, hearing that a crowd of rowdies were collecting in the neighborhood after dark with the intention of proceeding to his house, Llulla went out and attacked them single-handed, scattering them in all directions.

At last the Cubans found a champion to oppose the redoubtable Pepe, an Austrian ex-officer, who had entered the Cuban revolutionary service, a soldier of fortune, but a decidedly brave and resolute man. He was a good swordsman, but considering the formidable reputation of his antagonist, chose the pistol as a weapon more likely to equalize the disparity between the two men. The conditions were thirty paces, to advance and fire at will. When the word of command was given, the Spaniard remained motionless as a statue, his face turned away from his antagonist; while the Austrian, reserving his fire, advanced upon him with measured strides. When within a short distance of Llulla he raised his arm to fire, and at that instant the Spaniard, wheeling suddenly, shot him through both lungs. The Austrian was picked up, still breathing, and lingered some months before he died. His fate probably deterred others from following his example, as the Cubans found no second champion.

The spectacle of a solitary man thus defying the whole Cuban revolution, bidding all enemies of Spain to fight or hold their peace, evoked ardent enthusiasm both among the loyalists of Cuba and the Spaniards of New Orleans. Pepe soon found himself surrounded by strong sympathizers ready to champion the same cause; and telegrams began to pour in from Spaniards in Cuba and elsewhere, letters of congratula-

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

tion also, and salutations from grandoes. There is something particularly graceful and sympathetic in Spanish praise; and in reading those now faded missives, hung up in pretty frames upon the walls of Pepe's dwelling, I could not help feeling myself some of the generous enthusiasm that breathed in them: "*Felicitamos cordialmente y afectuosamente al pundonoroso y valiente Señor Llulla; ofriciendole, si necesario fuere, nuestras vidas*" (*voluntarios de artilleria*)..... "*Los voluntarios de Cárdenas admiran y abrazan al valiente Señor Llulla*" (*el commandante la casa*) ... "*Felicitamos al Señor Llulla por su noble, generosa, y patriótica conducta, ofriciendole nuestra cooperación en todos tiempos y lugares.*"

Such telegrams came fluttering in daily like Havanese butterflies, and solicitations for Pepe's photograph were made and acceded to, and pictures of him were sold by thousands in the streets of the great West Indian City. Meanwhile the Cubans held their peace, as bidden. And then came from Madrid a letter of affectionate praise, sealed with the royal seal, and signed with the regent's name, Don Francisco Serrano y Dominguez, el Regente del Reino, and with this letter the Golden

Cross of the Order of Carlos III (Carlos Tercero), and a document conferring knighthood, *libre de castos*, upon the valiant son who had fought so well for Spain in far-away Louisiana.

But I have yet to mention the most exquisite honor of all. Trust a Spanish heart to devise a worthy reward for what it loves and admires! From Havana came one day a dainty portrait of Pepe Llulla worked seemingly in silk, and surrounded by what appeared to be a wreath of laurels in the same black silk, and underneath, in black letters upon a gold ground, the following honorific inscription: "*A Don José Llulla, decidio sostenedor de la honra nacional entre los traidores de New Orleans.*" But that woven black silk was the silk of woman's hair, the lustrous hair of Spanish ladies who had cut off their tresses to wreath his portrait with! It hangs in the old man's parlor near the portrait of his dead son, the handsome boy who graduated at West Point with honors, and when I beheld it and understood it, the delicious grace of that gift touched me like the discovery of some new and unsuspected beauty in human nature.

LAFCADIO HEARN

Man and woman were created to dwell together—from time to time.

## THE RAG PICKER

A man sat upon a rock and pulled his life to pieces. The good of it he put in one pile and the bad in another, and the pile of the bad was the larger and he wept. "Fool," said a pilgrim who passed, "thinkest thou the gods care if thy garment be woven of white threads or of scarlet, if it prove but strong and keepeth the wind from thy heart?"

OLIVE BOULLEMET.

## Revel

Saint Aristippus and Saint Laughing Tom,  
    Prithee now come,  
Bring with ye gizzards of the Laughing Goose  
    And bring the juice  
Of monkeys, penguins and vain cockatoos.  
    We shall incant a spell  
    As solemn as all hell.

Saint Rabelais, ay, and saintly Anatole,  
    I pray ye all,  
Saints Dekker, Butler, and Democritus  
    All-glorious,  
Come with the feathers of the popinjay  
    And goose-down grey  
And gentle dilberries gathered by the way.  
    Come now and grace this revel  
    As solemn as the devil.

For we shall chant hereby an incantation  
    In honor of creation:  
With reverent step and upward-rolling eye  
    We shall give praise most high  
To God and Man and their great Destination.  
High-stepping round the cauldron we shall call  
    The Sprites Primordial  
Out from the womb of darkness and no-time  
    To join us in a rhyme  
    In honor of them all:  
    To join us in a toast  
To God and Man and the Great Holy Ghost.

Sure, one and all,  
Those Sprites Primordial  
Will drink their bumpers in this holy revel  
    As solemn as the devil,  
    For we shall give them wine  
    Finer than superfine,  
Brewed in our cauldrons to a chanted spell  
    As solemn as all hell,  
Made rich with gizzards of the Laughing Goose  
    And monkey-juice.

JOHN MCCLURE

## Business a la Mode

I HAVE given a hostage to Fortune, and am on my way to "success." Barring unreasonable disaster, it is not likely that I shall ever again go penniless. I shall fall short of the capitalist's swollen splendor, but good jobs of one kind and another will be mine until I am senile.

Naturally my viewpoint will change; the brain will grow obese concerning the athletics of so-called failure, those intellectual leaps and sprints, joyous or desperate, and the long cross-country grind, customary to the playboy spurred by visions of beauty and nightmares of the jail-hospital. My sense of proportion will come to lean as heavily to the west as it now veers widely to the east. The Doxology will then seem of more serious import than an organ-grinder's tone on the first Spring day, and the outline of Mimi's transparent-fingered hand, against the light, less impressive than the portly figure of old Sen. Leatherweasand, shouting flubdub from the rostrum, over a thumb-stained glass of water.

I shall say to myself: "After all, there is a deal of satisfaction in being well-walleted," and to the gay strip-lings: "Have a care lest you linger too long, a-sowing the wild barley."

Those pursy, profitable days, and platitudinous evenings! May the Elder Gods of sea and mountains—yea, the Pan who pipes an air as magical through city streets as in Boetian fields—be kind and not desert me utterly in my plutocratic need.

It is possible that I can perform a service by recording, fresh, the impressions of failure.

The American business stories which I have read might appropriately be en-

titled: "How Granther Got His Million, by Granther, after Getting." Granther invariably appears on the frontispiece in sepia, either ultra-natally with a Chesterfield in hand and another behind the ear, or as an imitation of an old woodcut, in a one-inch collar and a flat tie the size of my fist.

Our neurotic system of business affects many of us like an apple-corer, removing core and seeds, and leaving a wholesome but characterless pulp. Thus Granther, reminiscing of the vital years, is unable to remember how he felt. One would suppose, to read him, that he never cursed his boss, behind the latter's back, with full-mouthed oaths, for a slave-driver, or threw away a job to save a friend, or used a woman's influence to steal a better one.

It is the lack of Business' human side that I deplore in these worthy articles. I see Granther sanding the sugar as the grocer's clerk, but he is an octogenarian, toothless and bewigged, mumbling moral axioms over the barrel, and not the cheerful boy, who in reality grinned cynically at the deception. Of course it became necessary for him, in order to reach his pinnacle, to omit all spontaneous feelings except avarice, yet never tell me that the pruning was not done gradually, with halts and heartaches.

The gradual dehumanization of the B.M., during the process of success, is chiefly responsible, one guesses, for the artificiality of our business system—for the sassy switchboard gels and telephonic disarray; the silly glass coops and owl-eyed sekketaries; the whole mass of humbug, discourtesy and inefficiency encountered by ordinary wanderers in the maze of commerce as she is perpetrated throughout this Land of



the Free. Granther resembles the ostrich, which thrusts its head into the sand and imagines its tail feathers hidden, until some brutal sceptic, who doesn't play the game according to the rules, plucks them away.

Happily for Granther, the rules are generally observed. In fact it is so easy to grow fat by following them, with tongue in cheek, that to break them is foolish.

Take, for example, the process of getting a job, in the "upper hound" stratum, where the current remuneration may range from thirty-five to a hundred and fifty units per week, thus covering a majority of the supposedly intelligent citizens who are under patriotic obligation to register and vote, but who do not.

There are two standard ways of obtaining such a job: through influence, and by pavement-pounding. The first is arbitrary, an unexciting method, outside the province of the present commentator, who has had no noble sponsors. The second includes the agency (thumbs down!), the advertisement, and the circular letter, leading to the siege-interview.

To detail here the preliminary steps, were wasted time. The matter of recommendations is also inferior, since persons of slight originality collect them naturally, and those of talent can invent them.

Proceed we to the interview-by-siege.

The essential thing beyond all others, when the great man has signified that he may be seen, is to adopt a buoyancy. There is as yet no guarantee, or even a probability, that the interview will really take place; most great Americans, and especially those designated to handle employment for their firms, make appointments of this kind in a helter-skelter fashion—Texas leaguers

scooped into right field by the second stenographer, an indifferent batswomman. The applicant may not find his man in the building at all at the specified hour, and certainly will be halted at every station. Therefore he should start with his good-nature at double-plus.

I loathe particularly, as the liberty cap on the flagpole of inefficiency, the hole surrounded by ground glass, through which the visitor to the reception parlor of many of our best business houses peers down upon the hostile nape of Tussy Tappertoes. For such cases, I have but one counsel: break the glass unhesitatingly, and stun Tussy with a single blow. Only so can good-nature, however fortified, be held.

More hopeful is the situation commanded by Queenie with That Dark Red Hair, even though Queenie has obviously defeated a line of sad-eyed adventurers waiting flaccidly upon the mourners' bench.

Be brave, be jaunty; but do not jig too much! A bright-eyed indifferent nonchalance, if you gather what I mean, is the slant. Queenie has been fed sleek with compliments, particularly about the locks. Try, after a pause, a clever little touch anent her brain \* \* \* Dear God! If I but had the looks, with my experience I could go steaming past all Queenies sans a check.

Let the buoyancy be hoisted still another notch when entrance to the great man's presence is actually imminent. The bluff's the thing. Among Granther and the executive products of his school, a fetich has been made of the strange and unnatural combination of nnpudence and low, slapstick craft, to which a new slang contraction, as hideous as the quality itself, had to be assigned, because no term ignobly descriptive enough to fit it existed in the lan-

guage previously. "Pep"—begotten by Insanity upon Ignorance—is now the Open Sesame to the job-file.

Although inept and without business training I sold myself by pep in rapid succession to four publishers, an insurance firm, a calendar house, and a manufacturer of display advertising. Most of the deals were entirely unscrupulous on both sides. I meant to get what I could and leave when I chose, regardless of an employer's convenience, and it soon became patent, to even so unsophisticated a perception as mine, that the employer's real purpose was to hire me cheaply, squeeze me dry, and throw away the refuse.

The irritating art of the performance was its unintelligent hypocrisy. Like the gross flattery which we all adore, hypocrisy is a wonderful emollient, without which Anglo-Saxons certainly could not endure life among themselves. I could admit the necessity of softening rough business contracts. But why (I argued) go to so much trouble to obscure issues when the actual result was not efficiency but a waste? It would be more profitable in dollars and cents to hire a man on a basis of frankness, and let him develop his ability or prove his unfitness without the wretched humbug that pervaded the houses.

The criticism is elementary, and in fact the condition which calls it forth is the essential weakness of our business life, and to a degree of the social situation underlying it. As a people, Americans are not only snobs, but wasteful snobs. We enjoy the proud distinction, today, of a nation which has passed from youth to a knowledge of decadence, without acquiring the wisdom that should accompany age. Soon it may be a case of *La jeunesse ne peut plus, la vieillesse ne sait pas*.

Could imagination conceive a wilder,

more insane orgy than the American lunch hour? At the stroke of twelve innumerable dens of trade spew forth their hordes for stoking, and for an hour tumult rages in malodorous eating-rooms. A ravenous animal lurks behind each chair or stool to seize it, warm, from beneath its goulash-splattered tenant, who, streaming gravy, dashes popeyed past the toothpicks to the street. A lunchroom, and often the restaurant of the anchovy-and-alligator-pear class, suggests at five minutes past one a murder scene, wherein a fair young thing in white has been done to a bloody death betwixt the invading hordes and the home guard of terrible waiters.

Meseems that our national hypocrisy about women may be behind Granther's dry-rot, and the consequent stupidity of our business tactics. To delve too deeply into that side of the subject would be to court trouble. But it is indisputable that the position of the American woman in business is more vague than her continental cousin's. In Europe, women become active factors, definite influences or out-and-out parasites. The American woman, with her indefinite scope, is forced to blunder in all three orbits.

From the hound's level, feminine influence in a house is easily measurable. Not only the salaried assistants, but file-clerks, key-pushers and stem-winders, can form a fairly accurate estimate of the extent to which the chief and his *ober-leutnants* are swung by favorites; and most interestingly, the houses in which feminine influence, even of the comparatively inefficient American kind, is not marked, are anaemic.

Vulgar 'tis, but true, that where the switchboard gel in the entrance has a standing order instantly to notify Mr. Snicks, in the office, of the arrival at

the curb of Mrs. Snicks' car, and a hasty temporary readjustment of the office personnel ensues, a scandal may be impending, but there is life. Snicks, a full-blooded ruffian with nightly jazz tendencies, may have in his powerful brain, half-developed, a gorgeously imaginative scheme for extending his business over a continent. If he were less a mongrel, and could have the help of a thoroughbred, he would bring it to fruition. As it is, we see the effort abortive; perhaps a crash follows, perhaps only the disintegration of Snicks into a Granther.

Snicks has neither a competent wife nor a clever mistress. Mrs. Snicks has a bore for a husband; but a Frenchwoman might at least have reduced the situation to order. The truth is that Granther needs a vigorous application of really first-class, disciplined she-brains.

Europeans and Orientals think us fools in our slavery to our women. The former, living among us, is frequently corrupted, if not in the first generation, in the second. The latter holds his own longer. The Jew, inalienably Oriental, is likely to maintain his efficiency in proportion to his orthodoxy.

They are orthodox Jews to whom I, in my small sphere, owe surcease from business piffing. So much has been written about the Race by Cousins Pro and Con, and the Uplift Bros., that I shall not elaborate, but will merely compare my relief in working for a Jewish house to that of a war-worn husband who has escaped from a terrible wife to an excellently-run hotel. Utterly weary of Granther's sterile eccentricities, I find the alien entertainment delightful. My remedy is not a panacea. Just as some lovers like to pay their court to rabbit-women, who fuss about the flannels and dutifully flap their upper lips in lieu of cerebration, so do

many workers relish Granther and his solemn fume of petty indecisions. Such would not find delight in Jewry.

Deponent liketh the lethal woman and the vital job, infused by the Vision. The Oriental imagination reaches forward, creating a colorful dream-province of dominant industry, and the Semitic genius for accomplishment follows with much dust but also with decision. The Jewish business mind has few doubts; it knows what it wants, and is supported by centuries of courageous history and valid tradition. I do not think that Granther will develop true efficiency until, like an English lawn, he has a history; like the Jews, a tradition; and like all empires which have maintained a real dominance, a system of social values—a caste system.

The good democrat takes to caste as blithely as a New England deacon plunges into soft layer cake; any conscript who was at Brest or Tours knows it. The proposition that caste is advantageous, I will debate further against any licensed historian or economist who sends me an intelligent inquiry and a self-addressed stamped envelope, at any reasonable time prior to the actual beginning of my deterioration from success; and as an earnest of the quality of my steel, let me hint of acquaintance with the Platform. As one Chatauquan to others—

But standing as I do, coyly where success and failure meet, I am still sensitive to the playboy's emotions, and at the moment, the most important thing in the world appears to me to be the privilege of escorting to a recital by Ysaye a most glorious lady, who proves my pessimistic theories by supplying, in mind, life and person, a bright exception to them. Debate postponed. *Ar-rivederci.*

STEPHEN TA VAN.

## The Mutative Wight

I was a warrior in the Roman age  
And with some Caesar swung a doughty sword.  
By lion-hearted Richard did I wage  
Grim combat with the Saracenic horde.

I was a knight-at-arms in Lancelot's day  
And tilted Fame in many a tournament.  
With Pete Ronsard I wrought the roundelay,  
With brother Franc Villon his testament.

I was a courtier in Jack Suckling's time,  
A gallant in the days of Dick Lovelace,  
And more than one fine sonnet did I rhyme  
To win some token of my lady's grace.

In Spenser's generation I aspired  
A patron in the person of the King.  
With Master William Shakespeare I acquired  
A canniness for almost anything.

With Amerigo and Christopher I sailed  
Uncharted seas to continents unknown.  
By Jack Lafitte and "Johnny" Jones I hailed  
The empery of the waters as my own.

With Danny Boone and Davy Crockett, I  
Did blaze a trail where never man abode.  
Last year I battled Boches in the sky —  
Today I am a salesman "on the road."

BUFFINGTON TUTT

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The attitude of an angel towards a saint must be a curious blend of humility and disgust.

---

A drunkard is a visionary who cannot for an instant tolerate the world as it is.

---

If our own knees did not shake so hard we might perceive that the other man's are also beating a tattoo.



# Tales of the Psychometric Reporter

## I HOW I INTERVIEWED BACCHUS.

THE chief wants to see you."

It was the office boy of my Sunday editor who spoke. I had a standing start, but I beat him back to the desk by three feet. The chief glared at me, hid his income tax blank in a drawer, and said mildly:

"Benson, go get an interview with Bacchus on prohibition."

My ears stiffened like a man's in the heart of the Sahara who has just been told there was a brewery on the other side of the next sandheap.

"You mean, boss, Bacchus, the original rum-hound?" I falsettoed, my voice seeming to come out of my eyes.

"Why, you don't think I mean the president of the Fudge Union, do you?" he said, hiding his patent space cutter in a drawer.

He swivelled around to his Give-Them-the-Gate list. I knew the interview was over. I knew I had to get that interview with Bacchus or sign up somewhere else. I ambled up Broadway.

"What! you never heard of psychometry?"

I turned quickly. Two men, arguing excitedly, disappeared in the crowd. But the word "psychometry" remained. Was it a hunch?

What in the name of the Sacred Soup of Siam was psychometry? I turned into the nearest branch public library and feverishly turned the leaves of the dictionary. Psychometry is the big trick among the Occult Squad. It is "divination by touch." If you have psychometric powers you can call up the history of a man or an object by holding it in your hand. Hold your sweetheart's fan and all her flirtations will swim into your brain. Press a dollar of your landlord's in your hand and

his profiteering crimes will be yours.

A great thought-flash illuminated me. Maybe I had that power—maybe I was a born psychometrist.

Another tremendous thought opened its barrage on me. If I had that power, why couldn't I by holding a bottle of old Burgundy in my fist and letting my cerebrum and cerebellum float on their backs in my consciousness evoke Bacchus and interview him?

But the bottle of Burgundy? It was as rare as tobacco in a ten-cent pack of Mahomet cigarettes, worth its weight in radium, and the lamps of the Eighteenth Amendment sleuths were full upon me.

One thought pumps another out of the old pipes of our memory.

I knew the butler in the mansion of "Old Pale Ale" Smith, the millionaire clubman up the Avenue. He and his family were at Palm Beach. Would the butler let me in old "Pale Ale's" wine cellar, estimated to contain about a billion dollars' worth of joy-juice?

Easiest thing ever. Tom Pourboire not only let me in the cellar, but spread a table for me down there, and yanked out a bottle of old Burgundy. I was his bonus-fide guest, under the law; he should worry and so forth.

I buried my fist in the dust of the bottle of the unopened wine—I wasn't after the drink this time—and called:

"Oh, Bacchus, God of Booze, be with me now! You've done me many a rotten turn before the Ginmillennium set in—now you can do me a good turn. Appear, dear old Bac.!"

There was a terrible commotion away back in the dark of the vast cellar. Boxes and casks rumbled and fell. Into the light walked Bacchus. He was flesh and blood!

I knew he was Bacchus instinctively, although he had a Jack Dempsey hair cut, wore a bartender's white apron, a sport shirt, and a Japanese silk crêpe tie.

His face was the image of the late Johnny Walker.

In his hand he carried a large bottle of wine with the Latin inscription in huge letters burned in the glass:

"From the cellars of Nero, Chateau Orgy, Anno 61."

He took a seat on a cask of whiskey after shaking hands with me and addressing me as "Benson old pal."

"Talk low and quick," he said. "I've got old John Barleycorn, Grandfather Gambrinus and Little Lord Absinthe back in that corner. We're hiding from the raiders. Ain't this a great disguise? I dress according to the country I'm in. We're trying to drink up everything Old Pale Ale has in his cellar before he gets back from the beach.

"The gang back there are sick—it's a big job drinking all the stored stuff. You know I could always carry it. Where there's a wine there's a way with me.

"Well, go ahead, Benson, and spill your wheeze."

"What are you doing on earth, anyway, Bac., old boy?" I asked, looking at my questionnaire in my hat.

"Well, you humans put it over on us when the Great War got going. Mars took over all the gods and put Olympus on a war basis. He said as this was the biggest job he'd ever pulled off, he wanted clear heads about him, and that all the gods had to cut out late hours and all drink. Of course he was looking straight at me.

"John Barleycorn he said he could handle, because John could never handle himself. He didn't care much about Gambrinus, said he was only a German

milkman after all. He didn't even argue with Little Lord Absinthe—just booted him into the Styx, where old Charon kept kicking him along in disgust. But for me he had some respect; said I was as ancient as the earth, the gods and everything else. Tapping me on the bean wouldn't do any good, so he granted me a vacation to the Earth till he got through with his job.

"I took the three of them back there with me, and I've certainly had my troubles ever since. Truth to tell, Benson, we've been so lit up since we landed that I don't know how I'll get that gang back. Pegasus has become an old spavin. We're stuck."

"How did prohibition in America hit you?" I went on in a business-like voice, giving him the second question in my hat.

Before Bacchus could answer a voice that sounded like a singing coal mine came over the top from the abysmal darkness of the cellar:

"Hoorah! Hoorah! I'm a guy in wrong.

"The Constitush has got me an' me bar-lee-corn!"

"Can it!" shouted Bacchus. "No wonder they've got you wandering from cellar to cellar."

"That's the guy that put me on the blink. Why, his breath blew out the fires of Vulcan one morning Up There," continued Bacchus, addressing me. "John was a low-brow, never could disguise himself and was always singing out of turn. It's the bad actors that kill all the fun, and that fellow has certainly been a bad actor, although when there's any sickness around there ain't a better friend than—"

"But about prohibition, Bac?" I insisted, my reportorial instinct on the alert.

"Let me tell you, Benson," said Bacchus, poking his bottle of Nero's finest under my nose to emphasize his opinions, "that prohibition serves you right. You disgraced a god—that's me. I invented the finest toothache and grouch killer ever known—me and Gambrinus; but you Americans chucked us and picked up with that rowdy John Barleycorn and his crazy pals. You took that roughneck to your own tables, introduced him to your families, and when he couldn't come to you, you invented a Family Entrance and went to him, ramming me into hideous red-ink joints and keeping me alive on bum table d'hotels.

"It is written of old—by some wise guy or other—that no one can offend a god and get away with the goods. Why, I'm the oldest of the gods, the best and the healthiest. You made me a Cinderella and lavished all your love on that demon back there. Look at me now.

"Look at this rig I've got to dress in! Look how I've got to go sneaking around from cellar to cellar with that rowdy back there—and I a god, celebrated by poets and prophets in all ages, the friend of all real human beings, the father of laughter, the inventor of merriment. You've busted my heart—that's what you have!"

And dear old Bacchus began to blubber all over the cask. Near me a voice began to croak.

"I'm old! I'm old! I'm beer that's near. I'll go to Jersey to get up cheer!"

"That's old Gam." said Bacchus, drying his eyes. "He too's in bad with me."

"Will you come back, Bacchus?" I asked, that being the third question pasted in my hat.

"Did you ever hear of anything that didn't come back?" answered Bacchus, righting himself into something of his old-time form.

"As badly as you've treated me in this country, I'm going to stick. As a matter of fact, since Mars still has all his war measures in force up there, I've got to stick. I need America as much as you are going to need me. I am about twenty-thousand years old and I've traveled a bit, as your classical sharps will tell you.

"Well, Benson, I can tell you that there never was a nation or a people who tried to can me who didn't start toward Davy Jones' locker, which is, as you know, quite different from a club locker.

"There never was one exception. The Eskimos never had any use for me—and look at them! Ice eaters and the North Pole for a bathtub, and never a drink of the old stuff to warm them up. Jack Frost has got their souls as well as their bodies, and it'll get yours if you don't look out. Where life flourishes there am I; where it begins to frost, I retire."

"What will be the ultimate effect of prohibition, Bac?" I asked.

"Long faces, the dark brown taste of a universal mental grouch, and the disappearance of pleasure. Seriousness, my boy, has destroyed more people than even old John, back there."

"Are you and the crowd back there going to get away with all this stock?" I asked.

"Every bit of it without drawing a cork. When Old Pale Ale gets back his bottles will be as he left them, but there'll not be a drop in them."

"How's that done?"

"We absorb it by psychometric thirst." Bacchus replied with a tremendous guffaw.

His laugh was so loud that it startled me, and I took my hand off the bottle of Burgundy.

Bacchus had disappeared.

BENJAMIN DE C.



## Ambrose Bierce and the American Democracy

"WHAT can one do with such people," asked an intelligent Chinaman twenty years ago of the American democracy, "what can one do with such people, who have the conceit of the ages and the ignorance of all time?" It was this same Chinaman—or masquerading Caucasian—who described the American as "something into which is blown a tremendous energy, that is very wearisome, a bombast which is the sum of that of all nations."

Intelligent foreigners have often proved illuminating critics of this remarkable democracy. Chinamen, especially, have seen us very much as we are. And Frenchmen have perhaps appraised us more truthfully than any other Europeans. But critics of the American democracy, born among us, have been amazingly few. I can think of but three: Ambrose Bierce, dead—the devil alone could tell you in what part of Mexico—, Charles Marcotte, possibly dead and certainly obscure, and H. L. Mencken, at this moment very much alive.

Political theorizers and commentators upon government have been many—hymn-singers and apostles of joy, mostly, with nothing but sugared praise for popular government, nothing but awe before the truth, beauty and wisdom of majorities, nothing but admiration for this magnificent democracy of which it was their good fortune to be members. But the men of American citizenship who have been able to survey the democracy of America from a sane perspective—, who, while rubbing elbows with it, have been able to see it as from a belfry or the moon, have been,

in so far as I know, barely three. The remainder of the mob and the remainder of the theorizers and "literatuses" have paid but little attention to the astounding absurdity of this democracy of theirs which, "with a bombast which is the sum of that of all nations," proclaims itself a bird of rarest plumage and preens its feathers, with unconscious humor, before the world.

I am speaking here of Ambrose Bierce. He was the first real critic of democracy to appear after the nation reached its majority. I shall not speak of Charles Marcotte, who published his "Governments and Politicians" in 1893—a surprising but faultily written volume—, nor of Mr. Mencken who is only now, in this decade, turning the light of reason upon the American democracy with greater force, perhaps, than even Bierce (whose misanthropism somewhat crippled his effects).

Ambrose Bierce was a journalist who, it must be confessed, scattered his efforts. And yet, although no given book of his deserves to go down intact in the preserved literature of the world, from his complete works one volume can be collected which will deserve to abide in the House of Books, on the Shelf of Mockery, with the best of Voltaire, Swift and France. It is a pity that he is known chiefly as a writer of horror-tales.

I am here quoting haphazard from his works as they happen to apply to the American democracy, or democracy in general, in hope that I may persuade a few good Americans to procure and read his inquiry into the decline and fall of the American Commonwealth, his fables, his allegories, and particularly "The



Shadow on the Dial" and "The Devil's Dictionary." On Bierce's irony and wit in the grand manner, or the petty, it is not my purpose to touch. But I may be allowed to quote—since few in these parts are familiar with the productions of this strange humorist—this:

"The world was made a sphere in order that men should not push one another off," and these definitions from the "Devil's Dictionary":

"Rum: fiery liquors that produce madness in total abstainers."

"Worship: *Homo Creator's* testimony to the sound construction and fine finish of *Deus Creatus*."

"Weather: a permanent topic of conversation among persons whom it does not interest, but who have inherited a tendency to chatter about it from naked arboreal ancestors whom it keenly concerned."

"Reality: the Dream of a mad philosopher . . . the nucleus of a vacuum."

"Saint: a dead sinner revised and edited."

And this:

"How fascinating is Antiquity!—in what a golden haze the ancients lived their lives! We too are ancients. Of our enchanting time Posterity's great poets will sing immortal songs, and its archaeologists will reverently uncover the foundations of our palaces and temples. Meantime we swap jack-knives."

Ambrose Bierce, a determined misanthrope, was a keen investigator of popular government from the first. He noted early "that progress downward which is the invariable and unbroken trend of republican institutions."

He saw through the farce of balloting. His serious pages are full of references to the democratic system of majority-government, in which all difficulties are solved by counting noses. He speaks, in one of his essays indeed, of

this "human nose as a measure of human happiness—not the size of it, but its numbers; its frequent or infrequent occurrence upon the human face."

"In any matter of which the public has imperfect knowledge," he says in "The Game of Politics," "public opinion is as likely to be erroneous as an individual equally uninformed. To hold otherwise is to hold that wisdom can be got by combining many ignorances. A man who knows nothing of algebra cannot be assisted in the solution of an algebraic problem by calling in a neighbor who knows no more than himself, and the solution approved by the unanimous vote of ten million such men would count for nothing against that of a competent mathematician."

Ambrose Bierce, like all sane and intelligent men, knew that majorities are stupid, capricious and cruel. He fought to the last against the principles of democratic government, government by majorities—which is to say, the selection by dolts and dumbskulls of the functionaries of state, the determination of national policies by the illiterate. "If history teaches anything worth learning," he says in his essay on "Civilization," it teaches that the majority of mankind is neither good nor wise." Elsewhere he says: "It seems to me that the average man, as I know him, is very much a fool, and something of a rogue as well. . . . He has only a smattering of education, knows virtually nothing of political history, nor history of any kind, is incapable of logical, that is to say clear thinking, is subject to the suasion of base and silly prejudices, and selfish beyond expression . . . How is it that his views, of so intricate and difficult matters as those of which public opinion makes pronouncement through him, are entitled to such respect? . . . Majorities, embracing

as they do, the most ignorant, seldom think rightly: public opinion, being the voice of mediocrity, is commonly a mistake and a mischief." "Majorities rule, not because they are right, but because they are able to rule."

It was Ambrose Bierce who correctly labelled our civilization a "pickpocket civilization." And it was Ambrose Bierce who remarked "that imitative quality in the national character, which, by its superior intensity, serves to distinguish us from the apes that perish."

The American democracy, Bierce said, is "tolerant of successful knavery." "A good American is, as a rule, pretty hard upon roguery, but he atones for his austerity by an amiable toleration of rogues. His only requirement is that he must personally know the rogues . . . We may know them guilty, but we meet them, shake hands with them, drink with them, and if they happen to be wealthy or otherwise great, invite them to our houses, and deem it an honor to frequent theirs."

The farcical Christianity of the American democracy was a continual butt for Bierce's satire. And he saw as well as any the pitiable hoax of the contemporary church. He refers, in one place, to "the pious gentlemen who serve (with rank, pay and allowances) as Chaplains in the Army and Navy." And in a glorious passage rebutting a certain Dr. Parkhurst who had been so indiscreet as to champion the clergyman's love of lucre: "I think that so faithful a disciple as the Reverend Dr. Parkhurst has still a place to lay his head, a little of the wherewithal to be clothed, and a good deal of the power of interpretation to excuse it." Of missions he remarked: "Each sect would make this a Theocracy if it could, and would then make short work of any missionary from abroad . . . Happily

all religions but ours have the sloth and timidity of error; Christianity alone, drawing vigor from eternal truth, is courageous enough and energetic enough to make itself a nuisance to people of every other faith." And on this subject of practical Christnanity, he said: "I am indifferently versed in theology—whereof, so help me Heaven, I do not believe one word—but know something of religion. I know, for example, that Jesus Christ was no soldier; that war has two essential features which did not command His approval: aggression and defense. No man can either attack or defend and remain Christian, and is no man, no nation."

In Bierce's essay on "Civilization" you will find this: "The proposition that the average American workingman is better off than the South Sea Islander, lolling under a palm and drunk with overeating, will not bear a moment's examination. It is we scholars and gentlemen that are better off." And on this same subject of the superiority of civilization to savagery, he wrote the following which I cannot forbear to quote:

"It is admitted that the South Sea Islander in a state of nature is overmuch addicted to the practice of eating human flesh; but concerning that I submit: first, that he likes it; second, that those who supply it are mostly dead. It is upon his enemies that he feeds, and these he would kill anyhow, as we do ours."

Ambrose Bierce had nothing "to offer." He was not a constructive critic of democracy. He admitted that monarchical forms of government were likewise faulty. He seemed, however, to prefer a monarchy to a republic, and perhaps an aristocracy to either. At any rate, he was quite positive about democratic governments. He knew that government by the majority is inevit-

ably blockhead government—cruel, capricious, besotted and unjust. And he assaulted democracy at every opportunity. Particularly, he made war on those demagogues and charlatans who attempt to glorify democracy, who are perpetually preaching of the truth, beauty and wisdom of majorities. It was against those who gild the obscene truth that the majority of mankind is stupid, incompetent and wicked that he fired most of his broadsides. He offered nothing in place of democracy. "My allegiance to republican institutions," he said, "is slack through lack of faith in them as a practical system of governing men as men are." But he said also: "I am no contestant for forms of government—no believer in either the practical value or the permanence of any that has yet been devised."

He would have agreed with Jerome Coignard in his dictum on the inhabitants of Montbard. His attitude was one of bitter irony toward man, the monkey, in all his antics. And I can do no better, in concluding these extracts, than by quoting the following from "The American Sycophant":

"Not only are we no less sycophantic than the people of monarchical countries; we are more so. We grovel before their exalted personages, and perform in addition a special prostration at the clay feet of our own idols—which they do not revere. The typical 'subject,' hat in hand to his sovereign and his noblemen, is a less shameful figure

than the 'citizen' executing his genuflexion before the public of which he is himself a part. No European court journal, no European courtier, was ever more abject in subservience to the sovereign than are the American newspaper and the American politician in flattery of the people. Between the courtier and the demagogue I see nothing to choose. They are moved by the same sentiment and fired by the same hope. Their method is flattery, and their purpose profit. Their adulation is not a testimony to character, but a tribute to power, or the shadow of power. If this country were governed by its criminal idiots we should have the same attestations of their goodness and wisdom, the same competition for their favor, the same solemn doctrine that their voice is the voice of God, our children would be brought up to believe that an Idiocracy is the only rational form of government. And, for my part, I'm not at all sure that it would not be a pretty good political system, as political systems go. I have always, however, cherished a secret faith in Smithocracy, which seems to combine the advantages of both the monarchical and republican idea. If all the offices were held for life by Smiths—the senior John being President—we should have a settled and orderly succession to allay all fears of anarchy and a sufficiently wide eligibility to feed the fires of patriotic ambition. All could not be Smiths, but many could marry into the family."

SILAS BRENT

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It is well to know the truth and speak it, but it is better to know the truth and speak about palm-trees.—*Arab Proverb.*

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It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles—the less they have in them, the more noise they make pouring it out.—*Pope.*

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It is better to fool one's self completely than to be very wise.





## Gay Thomas: Old Style

There was four swinging suns in heaven,  
There was four rolling seas on earth,  
The stars was seventy and seven  
Before Gay Thomas came to birth.

Gay Thomas he was born of woman,  
Gay Thomas was a son of man,  
There was four swinging suns in heaven  
When Gay Thomas' life began.

Gay Thomas lived in pomp and glory,  
Gay Thomas was an earthly prince,  
Gay Thomas span a famous story  
Of wonder and magnificence.

There is four swinging suns in heaven,  
There is four rolling seas on earth,  
The stars is seventy and seven  
And theirs is all the mirth.

JOHN MCCLURE

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## Starrett's Chicago Letter

SINCE H. L. Mencken has called Chicago "the literary capital of the United States" it is meet and proper for a progressive literary journal to support a correspondent at the capital. Chicago has been the cradle of many movements, since the day the now famous Elgin movement was established, a few miles to the westward, and rocks a number of them at present with incredible enthusiasm. Those it does not rock, it stones . . . I thank you. Here, then, at the heart of things, I propose to play Autolycus to *The Double Dealer*, and to mix praise with blame and comment with criticism, as recklessly as I mix my poetical allusions.

Seriously, the number of Chicagoans who have done noteworthy things, or who, in one way or another, have been honored for achievement, within recent weeks, is significant—significant of something, and, I think, of Chicago. Edgar Lee Masters has published "Mitch Miller," hailed as a classic of the "Tom Sawyer" school, and Floyd Dell, formerly literary critic of the Chicago Evening Post, has published "Moon-Calf." About both these novels, the best critics have said enthusiastic things and there can be little doubt that they belong to our permanent literature. Dell is a New Yorker, just now, and editor of *The Liberator*, but that his heart turns backward is evidenced by his



book. In poetry, Carl Sandburg, writing with all his early gusto, has given us "Smoke and Steel," his third and perhaps his most powerful collection of verses, and Masters' "Domesday Book" also has been released by its publishers. This latter volume is rather tremendous, and is a return to the author's "Spoon River" manner. Somewhere in its depths, a shrewd and ultra-modern bookseller furtively pointed out to me certain lines which, in his opinion, might allow of his cataloguing the work under the caption "Facetiae." He chuckled obscenely; and I let him live out of sheer good nature, for I had sold an essay that day: but this sort of person should be expunged from human record. It was some such ass who brought about the suppression of "Jurgen," in New York, and who will turn up with a leer, doubtless, when my own unwritten novel comes from the press.

Then there is Knut Hamsun, who used to ring up fares on the old Halsted street line, who went back to Sweden (I think it was Sweden; it may have been Norway) and wrote novels, and who now is a Nobel prize winner and called "the best writer in Scandinavia." John Masfield did that sort of thing, and look at him now. He was once a bartender in New York, and something, I think, in Chicago, although the last time he was here, and lectured at Orchestra Hall, he looked like a lost soul beset by furies, surrounded as he was by innumerable club women eager to shake the hand that once had combed the flowing locks of Münchener. When the conductors and bartenders begin to write their novels or their memoirs we shall be able to talk more loudly of "our literature." But our own submerged ones, if they are writing, are not finding publishers. I don't think they are writing.

An interesting sign of New York's decadence as a literary center, is the attention the New York publishers are giving Chicago "Reviews." The Chicago Evening Post, Daily News, and Tribune, I believe are more frequently quoted in advertisements than the other journals that boast a book page, and when a critical and descriptive booklet is required, it is likely to be a Chicago critic that gets the job. Llewellyn Jones of the Post has just produced an excellent eulogy of Joseph Hergesheimer for Knopf, and not long ago did the same for Johann Bojer, for that author's publisher, while Burton Rascoe, long the Tribune critic, is the leading contributor to Knopf's handsome booklet on Mencken.

Jones, by the way, is conducting an amiable altercation with Amy Lowell anent the form, function, physics, eugenics and *raison d'être* of poetry. The debate has not yet reached any platform, but has been exercised in the columns of a number of journals, and in the mails. Jones knocked out a home run by reprinting and circulating as a pamphlet a long article contributed by himself to the Sewanee Review; and it is now Miss Lowell's inning \* \* \* Rascoe, who, since leaving the Tribune in circumstances that point to a disagreement, has been ranching in Oklahoma (*do they ranch in Oklahoma?*), is reported to be writing the G. A. N., but actually he is translating French classics for Knopf. "Mademoiselle de Maupin" and "Manon Lescaut" were the first two. I wish he would translate Remy de Gourmont and Octave Mirbeau, but he won't—I've asked him. He says they are "too much so."

Harry Hansen, who succeeded Henry Blackman Sell as literary editor of the Daily News, so far as I can ascertain has written no booklets, but is likely to

be called upon, at any moment, to pamphletize F. Scott Fitzgerald.

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"Stuart Mason," Oscar Wilde's bibliographer (in private life Mr. Christopher S. Millard of the Bungalow Bookshop, London), has sent me his latest catalogue. It is delightful on a number of counts, but hidden away for the shrewd ones to find there is the record of a magnificent feud. As follows: Aldous Huxley having called Wilde a "second rate literary man," in some issue of the London Mercury, Mason reprinted the insolence on a page of his catalogue, and immediately opposite listed Huxley's two esteemed volumes (which bring about 30 shillings in their first edition) at a shilling and sixpence for large paper copies. To add insult to this injury, he quoted a London reviewer on Huxley to the effect that there had been nothing like Aldous since Oscar Wilde. Peace hath her victories!

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Some time, if I am permitted, I shall talk at greater length of The Bookfellows. At present, let me say that they are doing nice things nicely, and will do better things. They publish only for their own membership, and their publications are handsomely printed in limited editions. The latest issue of the organ of the order, the Step Ladder, contains a clinical analysis of publishers' prices, the first stone in a threatened campaign. George Steele Seymour heads the order.

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The idea of a poet being a "best seller" is shocking; but Carl Sandburg has given up his rented place in Maywood and has purchased a retired villa in Elmhurst, a little nearer the city. Three sentinel geese patrol the front yard. What they symbolize I do not know.

Another minor poet has burst into song bloom on the subject of "Sleep", in a recent issue of a popular magazine. In praising sleep, poets often neglect to say how much their art promotes it.

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Walter M. Hill, the antiquarian bookseller, has become a publisher in earnest. His recent ventures include collectors' brochures on Stevenson, Ambrose Bierce, Lemuel Gulliver, and Lincoln.

\* \* \*

Charles C. FitzMorris has been appointed chief of police of Chicago. Charlie FitzMorris . . . ! As a high school boy, Fitz won a 'round the world race for Chicago, in competition with a handful of callow youths from other cities, all financed by the Hearst newspapers. Later, he became a reporter for Hearst, still later he was made secretary to Mayor Harrison and was continued in that office by Mayor Thompson, and now he is Thompson's choice for police chief. There is material for a special article in this, but no room in this department. Yet a chronicle of Chicago events of interest to enlightened persons would be incomplete without this mention. I await my first sight of him in uniform. Like grand opera tenors, one thinks of police chiefs as fat; but occasionally a particularly good one surprises us in error. FitzMorris can still wear the dress suit he wore when he was married. Chicago's far-famed crooks are reported to be "coming right down."

\* \* \*

Eastern book notices chronicle the prospective advent of "The Americanization of Edward Bok," the gentleman who for years edited *The Ladies' Home Journal*. No doubt this will interest many persons, but a more important matter, which, as yet, has had all too

little attention, might be called "the Bok-ing of America." I suspect Mr. Bok of responsibility for the bungalow, the casserole, pink literature for pale people, illustrated magazine covers, and other things too irritating to mention . . . His disservice to literature hardly can be overestimated . . . Yet they say he is a gruff masculine

person, in private life, with a voice like a rusty lock.

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Glancing over what I have written, it all seems uncommonly amiable, which I had not exactly intended. Perhaps, however, it is as well. The long winter days are ahead, and one should hoard one's ammunition.

VINCENT STARRETT

If the rich could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, the poor would soon lose their taste for doing it.

The reason why so few marriages are happy, is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.—*Dean Swift*.

Indignation is always an acknowledgment of defeat. When we are beaten we bawl for the rule book.

## Parading the Pink Patella

OUR friends, the ladies, have invariably been a source of wonder, but in this abstruse era they seem to have shattered all previous records by a brazen attempt to lay bare the whole show and prompt us to apologize for our intrusion into polite society with the spirit of the man who inadvertently opens the wrong bath-house door. Times have changed, you say. Questionless they have, but we are old-fashioned enough to opine that the hoary old gentleman with the scythe cannot condone everything. We will always hold, for instance, that the *modus operandi* of the boudoir should remain there, in

theory, at least and not be displayed in the corner drug store.

Oddly enough, instead of admitting these idiosyncrasies as such, they generally see fit to conjure up some saner alibi, to salve the conscience, we fancy. Didn't we inquire of a young lady last summer, when the trick of rolling the hose had grown into an obsession, the point of so ridiculous a fashion? And didn't she strike us cold with the rather pathetic rejoinder that ladies of discrimination are oblivious to fashion where comfort and common sense are concerned? Not being able to laugh that down we chanced a guess that were



Fifth Avenue or the Rue de la Paix to feature them held up from the sides by a three inch telephone cable swung around the neck, the ladies of discrimination would at once set out to bear the agony of lacerated flesh without the twitch of a plucked eyebrow. Similarly, the use of translucent, indeed, transparent materials for the garb of the day, and the shaving down of the evening gown to a degree whereat even the most hardened begin to whisper "daring," cannot help but excite our sensitive imaginations.

Is it, after all, a mere blind obedience to the mandates of the fashion-mongers, or have the whole army of their followers taken up the movement with the assurance that it is a new and subtle form of intrigue for flattery, matrimony, and whatnot? If the latter be the case, the ladies are plainly on the wrong trail for in the dear old yester-

year it was found not *a propos* to unveil the remoter charms, yet they received their flattery, matrimony, and whatnot, just the same. But today your little fellow toddles out on the front porch and reviews the pageant of femininity in all its frankness, as unperturbed as a commanding general.

This, of course, is only part of a complex problem, and we see the defenders of the modern passing it lightly off and calling us prudes. Well, we have never yet been known to apply sobriquets to the spade, nor do we countenance the drawing of the curtains of respectability before the central facts of life, but if prudes we be, we beg one parrying thought: We cannot stand by and see the beauty and romanticism of a perennial institution torn to tatters without one little wistful glance backward.

ANTHONY GALT

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The sinner jogs along his path, comforted and upheld with the thought of the joy there will be in heaven when he repents.

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## Reviews of Books

### SAN CRISTOBAL DE LA HABANA.

(HERGESHEIMER, JOSEPH: *San Cristóbal de la Habana*, N. Y., Knopf, 1920.)

Mr. Hergesheimer, through his long years of literary apprenticeship and in his present period of remarkable popular success, has followed constantly the will-o'-the-wisp of style. It has been, since his beginning twenty years ago, Mr. Hergesheimer's intention to supplement the world's supply of beautiful letters. This is something to be grateful for.

The writers of prose in America who have seriously and faithfully attempted to penetrate the mysteries of language with a view to the production of beauty can be numbered almost on one's nose. There are, perhaps, four or five. Mr. Cabell and Mr. Hergesheimer and Mr. Santayana (who, though he writes beautifully, seems to be not so much an American as an inhabitant of the moon) are among them.

"San Cristóbal de la Habana" is a study in style. Structurally and basically it is a departure from Mr. Herges-



heimer's usual field. It is not narrative fiction. It is a volume of emotional interpretation—of Mr. Hergesheimer and of Havana. He uses himself and the city as mannikins upon which to drape pages of English. And the book challenges consideration not so much for its content as for its manner. It is intended pretty surely as a *tour de force* in beautiful letters. It is issued in a fancy cover at a fancy price. It leaves the press, in fact, as a "first edition."

And Mr. Hergesheimer in this book almost proves his point. He almost proves that he is a master of style. He certainly proves that he can write much better than most of his contemporaries. He shows a deliberate and intelligent artistry in language that is no less serious and high-intentioned than that of Hawthorne, James and Hearn. He shows extreme subtlety in the recording of sensation and of idea. There is, in "San Cristóbal de la Habana," a consistent and conscious striving after beauty. It is often successful. Lovers of art in words will find much to delight them—a phrase, a picture, a sentence—in many places in this book. Remove Latcadio Hearn, who is really not ours at all, and we have nothing in American literature in the same manner which surpasses it. I doubt if we have anything which equals it. As a study in style, I am inclined to believe that "San Cristóbal de la Habana" is a success; as contemporary writing in America goes, it is a tremendous success.

But Mr. Hergesheimer, from the very nature of his approach to literature, particularly in this book, challenges comparison with the masters of the language. He demands to be considered with the stylists of this and all time. And in this connection, one is quite safe in saying that "San Cristóbal de la Habana," as a thing of beauty, is inferior not only to a great many things

that have been done in the golden ages, but to many things recently done and now being done in English. Perhaps it is rhythmically that he is wanting. Perhaps it is in a too careful and too meticulous attention to detail that he mars the complete beauty which he desires. He is a better craftsman than Mr. Anderson or Miss Cather (who are apparently not interested in style at all). He is one of our best. But he has a long way to travel before he can arrive at the magic of James Branch Cabell, George Moore, Lord Dunsany and even Hilaire Belloc. I am not at all sure that he will ever arrive at an equivalent beauty.

But we must hope that he will. For the present he commands our highest respect. And the opening words of "San Cristóbal de la Habana" are words one cannot forget:

"There are certain cities, strange to the first view, nearer the heart than home."

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#### APHRODITE—PIERRE LOUYS

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*Note*—This review of Pierre Louys' *Aphrodite* was submitted to the Editors by a gentleman locally connected with the turf. They consider it an adequate estimate of this much discussed book.

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My partner, Joe Goff, who also is a follower of the sport for kings told me you pay good coin for what you call "book reviews"—so I thought as long as I am with the dogs in New Orleans I could pick up a little extra jack by telling about a book I read called *Aphrodite*. And let me state right here and now it is some book; it would take the varnish off a hard-wood floor if properly applied. A Frog named Pierre

Louys wrote it—Louie knows some stuff—

Well anyway, it seems there is this frail named Chrysis back in Alexandria Egypt when the world was yet a kid; she was known as a "priestess of Aphrodite," the God of Love. Nowadays there is no polite name for them, tho about five years ago they were called white slaves. But Chrysis was no slave—she was a nifty little worker and all the high hats of Alex. as well as the two year olds would stroll by and pass the time of day as it were. Chrys was not ever what you might call lonesome.

But at this stage of the game a guy named Demetrios comes along. Deme was the kind who has to beat 'em off with a stick. He was supposed to be brought to Alexandria to carve a statue, but from the way the women blocked his path, I don't see how he had much time to carve. He had to kick them away from the door-step to get in the house—besides this he was the Queen's own special little man. This gives you an idea what class Demmy ran in and if he had a swelled head, it was no wonder.

One night he was loafing around by the docks when who should blow by but Chrysis all dolled up like a million dollars. Demmy gives her the halt signal, but she pulled right on past him without a good evening. Off he is after her and when they are neck and neck he pulls the begging line. Then Chrysis lays him out, she says even if all the other sporting girls are crazy over him, he is nothing in her young life at all. But as long as he is so anxious, if he will steal three trinkets; a comb, a mirror and a pearl necklace—well maybe. These had no value to Chrysis except as belonging to three other broads and Demetrios, not too tickled over the

idea but knowing you can't argue with a woman, said "All right."

Well, to make the story short, he cops the necklace and these two toilet articles, which the jane wears though she gets strung up by the authorities for her trouble, so the nearest Demetrios ever gets is to dream about it.

Of course, there is a lot more describing other "priestesses of Aphrodite" and the temple of this god and what went on inside, all of which this French writer seems to think as sweet and harmless as a love story in *The Ladies' Home Journal*. I asked Joe what he thought about it. Joe was a rounder in his day but he didn't agree with this guy's line. "There is nothing beautiful about playing with those babies," he says. "All they want is your dough."

Well, I guess Joe is right; but whenever I hear one of those old dried up "has beens" that have long ago run their last race and should be on pasture, give advice to the young or put over one of those laws to enforce chemical purity the way they do, I think of what this Frenchman says in the preface: "It seems that the genius of races, like that of individuals is before all sensual. All the cities which have reigned over the world—Babylon, Alexandria, Athens, Rome, Venice, Paris—have been by a general law, all the more licentious as they were more powerful, as though their dissoluteness were necessary to their splendor. The cities where the legislator has attempted to plant artificially narrow and unproductive virtue have been from the first day, condemned to absolute death."

This is a little past my speed; but if there is anything in this Pierre Louys' dope, it don't look like any cinch to place all your wad on America's nose for the final sweepstakes.

**MR. BODENHEIM  
FROM THE SAHARA OF BOZART**

ONE out of the several Southern poets whom Mr. H. L. Mencken overlooked, in his final estimate of the South's place in literature, is Mr. Maxwell Bodenheim. Under the caption "The Sahara of Bozart" in his "Prejudices; Second Series," Mr. Mencken says, referring to the South: "Down there a poet is almost as rare as an oboe player, a dry point etcher or a metaphysician." We entirely concur with him. And he is as rare, likewise, "up there" and "out there" and "anywhere." But Mr. Bodenheim, we insist, is one of these rarities despite the fact that he experiments in the so called, newer forms. In his "Advice, and Other Poems," Alfred A. Knopf, 1920, he shows a decided advance over the craftsmanship of his first book, "Minna and Myself." Here we find him still evanescent, still fantastic, still bordering on preciosity, but beyond this something more, decidedly and distinctly the original artist. Observe the first poem in the book:

**ADVICE TO A STREET PAVEMENT.**

Lacerated grey has bitten  
Into your shapeless humility.

Little episodes of roving  
Strew their hieroglyphics on your muteness.  
Life has given you heavy stains  
Like an ointment growing stale.  
Endless feet tap over you  
With a maniac insistence.

O unresisting street-pavement,  
Keep your passive insolence  
At the dwarfs who scorn you with their feet.  
Only one who lies upon his back  
Can disregard the stars.

Note the crispness of the cadence, the lucidity of the picture. We lift this from page 30:

**WHEN FOOLS DISPUTE.**

A trickle of dawn insinuated itself  
Through the crevices of black satiation.  
The elderly trees coughed, lightly, hurriedly,  
In remonstrance against the invasion.  
Lean with a virginal poison,  
The grass blades shook, immune to light and time.

A bird lost in a tree  
Shrilly flirted with its energy...  
One fool, in the garden, spoke to another.

All in all, Mr. Bodenheim is a poet—not a singer, not a great poet, not exactly a satisfactory poet, but, nevertheless, a poet, and though we do not share the enthusiasm of his most ardent admirers, we do at least find in this little volume many strikingly symbolic passages.

---

**CODA**

Life—  
A whimsical jest  
At best.  
Death—  
Pardie,  
The ultimate drollery.

—Adapted from the Corsican

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---

**JUST A WORD  
IF YOU PLEASE**

THERE IS SUCH AN ATMOSPHERE OF QUALITY ABOUT  
MAYER ISRAEL CLOTHING—SUCH AN AIR OF RICHNESS,  
REFINEMENT, AND EVEN COSTLINESS—THAT ONE IS APT  
TO JUMP TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THEY ARE PROHIB-  
ITIVE IN PRICE. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT  
THEY ARE EXTREMELY REASONABLE. DON'T JUMP TO  
CONCLUSIONS! JUST ASK THE PRICE. IT'LL PLEASE YOU.

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*INC.*



# The DOUBLE DEALER

*".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."*

The appearance of Vol. I, No. 1, of THE DOUBLE DEALER, has brought forth much comment and not a little benevolent advice. We have been told by no less a critic than Mr. Mencken that "the magazine as it stands looks second-class, and is." What magazine is first-class, we inquire?

Other weighty authorities have deplored the thinness of our book and the apparent paucity of material therein. Some, keener visioned, have carefully measured the margins and, finding a woeful lack of uniformity, have mentally consigned New Orleans printers to their respective "devils." Finally, from the Pacific Coast, come disparagements of the lusty infant, weighing him in the scales against the aged *Atlantic Monthly*, the hoary *Mercure de France* and *Mlle. Vanity Fair*, they seem to marvel at the unevenness of the balance.

Gentlemen, what would you? Pallas Athene leapt full armed from the head of Zeus. We are not Zeuses. White Aphrodite sprang from the foam of Oceanus. We are not Titans.

Myths aside, forward realities! Admitting the above-enumerated faults, we, nevertheless, believe that in printing the January issue we offered to the discriminating a potent appetizer for the banquet to be. With this number the canapé! Do not fidget in your

seats, gentle readers. The viands are forthcoming; surprises are in store.

Reiterating our pronouncement of last month, we shall "remain only ourselves who can deceive them both by speaking the truth." Beyond this we will not pledge THE DOUBLE DEALER.

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## VALEDICTORY

Passes, March 4th beyond public applause and scorn, from out the cartoonist's brain and politician's head, one Woodrow Wilson, erstwhile Coiner of Catchwords, moral White Hope of the World and President of these United States of America.

And so as he ducks out of the spotlight let us recall how he "strutted and fretted his hour on the stage." What an hour it was! Skimming the "Watchful Waiting" period when we were "too proud to fight" we rise at an alarmingly steep incline to the "privilege of shedding America's blood." How this privilege was availed of is now history. So passionately did the idea take on with the civilian population that it became the fashion to boil in oil on suspicion of Teutonic sympathy; while any but the most reverend mention of the president's name was—*Lèse Majesté*. All

doubt should be forthwith dispelled, once and for all, as to the efficacy of advertising.

Commander in Chief of The Army and Navy, virtual Dictator of the Allied Forces, he was. Not Caesar, nor Alexander, nor all the Popes and Sultans of the Ages have ever had such sway as he then held; while his vassals and underlords slapped opinion into shape, muffled the acousticon of whispered doubts as to their own godlike omniscience and stirred the stewpot of hatred with untiring arms.

Then the victory of the armies and the truce. Day of days, when he stepped like Xerxes from the regilded *Martha Washington* onto the carpet laid on the docks of Brest between the stiffened ranks of trick soldiers at "present arms." *On a acclamé le Président Wilson à Paris*, and all over Europe and the World as the one who would dole justice to all and spike the cannon forever.

Why draw the fly from out its suddenly transparent ointment—the academician befuddled between two international sharps? Why re-tell how he fell so vertically from public grace? More humane it is now to smile at the fashion in which he bilked them all, the wise ones of earth no less than the clods.

President Woodrow Wilson passes. What will happen to him is no hard conjecture. He will write.

As for us, we turn a fresh page of the ledger. Without disputing apotheosizers we offer a ready palm to Dr. Wilson, the writer. Welcome, brother of the bleeding stylus. President Wilson—*Ave atque Vale*.

## BACK TO NORMALCY

Since the voters of this country have almost by acclamation elected Tweedledee in default of Tweedledum, we may look forward with assurance to a rule of *normalcy*. Everyone says so; the very billboards which announce the shrinking cost of vestments admit, "We are getting back to normal."

Back to normal—or better, forward to normal, to a time when the bear will lie down with the bull; when farmer, laborer, scalper, jobber, distributor, and retailer will be content to snatch only a modest share from each other; when the Rolls-Royce will again retail at a reasonable price; and the agriculturist will no longer have to sell his wheat at such a pitiful figure that Geraldine must stop attendance of a fancy eastern finishing school. In these nearby golden days we shall all be rich, all serenely content, free to turn our minds away from sordid details to the enjoyment of Babe Ruth and Constance Talmage.

We do not want to appear irrelevant, but have you ever played golf? Then you must know that every golf player is chronically "off his game." All the other golfers will tell you that one day Q. went out and miraculously beat his record fifteen strokes. Now, he is absurdly attempting to repeat the performance. Or, as he would express it, he is trying to get "back to normal."

Fellow mal de mer-maids and men, on this economic ocean, which tosses us high, rolls us under, or leaves us petulantly becalmed, reflect—is *normalcy* a possible condition; or is it but a delusion?

## VOX POPULI

Bravado, bluster, brass, swagger, assurance, front, nerve, dash, confidence, gesture, audacity—term it what you will, this “something” is the trick that puts it over on the herd.

Captain Bobadil, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, Bombastes Furioso, Chrononhotontologos, Hector, Cromwell, Napoleon, Richard Brinsley Sheridan *et al* had the idea. Witness D'Annunzio, in our own age, an arrogant little “dago” with a fancy alias, snapping his fingers at the world. True, a sort of a poet and by many cried a genius, whatever that means, but, by all the gods, Master Jack Pudding himself.

And how many more such, because of mental limitations alone, playing to an infinitely smaller audience, may we discern about us here and elsewhere—pretty little fellows all—strutting, mouthing, pirouetting, right proud, indeed, of their divers offices, rituals, mummeries. We discover them trading in Wall Street, parading on Fifth Avenue, sauntering in and out of the exclusive clubs of any larger city—ever the super-manikin!

At patriotic meetings, at civic and dignitarian banquets, on decorated platforms, wherever speeches are addressed to the “peepul,” our Master Jack Puddings are Johnny-on-the-Spot with their frock or dinner coats, as the occasion warrants, flaunting boutonnieres and immaculate waistcoats.

Nor do we detect them only in social and financial circles—politics and the professions, the Army, the Navy, and the Church are veritably *alive* with them, these pretty fellows.

We observe them, without the aid of the Press, in the Senate Chamber, the House of Representatives, the Gubernatorial incumbencies, and, if we dare, we may glance up and glimpse them smirking down upon us from the loftier sinecures—always they are recognizable.

Even here, in this, our ancient and highly enlightened community, where Mademoiselle Frou Frou and Mrs. Grundy rub elbows at charity bazaars, and sip tea together in the Quartrante Club, these knights of the curb and carpet are conspicuous. We note them next door, across the street, in the big house on the avenue, presiding over banks, directing businesses, captaining educational and other drives, in all the tinselly places where poise and purse are paramount.

Still, when census is taken, they are not overly numerous, these charlatan chaps—remains, by necessity, *hoi polloi*, the hero-worshipping herd. Instance, J. Philander Balderdash. Behold his impressive manner, remark his popularity. Everyone secretly envies him. He is undoubtedly a big man, a regular he-man, a man of position and parts. Consider, also, Judge Flubadub. What a figure he cuts of the cultured barrister, with his slight air of condescension, and his not quite too ponderous dignity. Observe, moreover, the Honorable John L. Suchamuch and Professor Ninian Folderol and Mister This and Mister That—gallant gentlemen all, rogues all, behind the mask.

But, alas, brother, in the summing up, who is exempt? Not you, not we, not Bill Jones, a nice lad at that, nor old Doctor Mortyx in the Maison Rouge



Building, nor, peradventure, the Reverend Simon Pure himself.

"All is vanity," saith the Preacher. Vanity is all," retorts Master Pudding, and when the final inventory is made, we may be not a little surprised to find even ourselves, even you, and even us, checked, classed and bundled, by the Perpetrator of this "ALL" into one great sack bearing the uncompromising tag, "Mountebankiana."

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

"...I CAN DECEIVE THEM BOTH BY SPEAKING THE TRUTH."

ISSUED MONTHLY BY

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SAYS Pascal: "What a chimera is man, what a confused chaos! What a subject of contradiction! A professed judge of all things, and yet a feeble worm of the earth; the great depository and guardian of truth, and yet a mere huddle of uncertainty; the glory and scandal of the universe."

Indeed, what strange creatures we are, what pitiful creatures, we pantalooned men and petticoated women, weak and white and soft and timorous! What hapless, hopeless cowards, what droll fantastic double-faced fools, what absurdities, what anomalies, and yet, by the gods, what astonishing phenomena we remain.

No mundane spectacle presents, think we, at once, so pathetic and splendid an aspect as that of groping, introspective, self-conscious humanity. Man the maggot—man the deity—man the sorriest of animals by sheer power of imagination making and marring the entire visible and tangible world about him—man, the master charlatan, a victim, to the last, of his own chicanery. In very truth, man the chimera!

### MARGOTTE DANCING

Women there were,  
Come yesteryear,  
Handsome as you are,  
No less dear.

Time remembers  
Of all of these  
Pale-browed Helen  
And Heloise.

Others there were  
Whom Time forgot—  
Nimble-legg'd hussies  
Like you, Margotte!



## A Thousand Head of Cattle

**M**Y grandfather drove a thousand head of cattle from northern Moldavia, through the plains of Valachia, across the Danube to the front at Plevna. The war was at its fiercest, Osman Pasha was getting desperate, and the besieging armies needed food.

A thousand head of cattle were let out of the stalls and corrals. Most of the men were on horseback, a few on foot, and a dozen big dogs made up the convoy. Grandfather was the last man. Two kind eyes in a savage face, a long beard inclined to be reddish brown. He never turned his face after saying good-bye to his wife, that is, as long as he thought she could see him.

She did not think. She only sat down and cried and watched the sea of cattle move in waves to the valley. Slowly they were swallowed up by the hills and she was alone. Her husband's tall lamb-skin cap was the last thing she saw go down behind the distant hills.

It was early in the morning. Soon the village began moving about and my grandmother found she was a stranger in the place. No one seemed to have noticed that the world had turned hard and cruel that morning. Only one spot and the things in it kept their former attitude toward her: the candle-dipping shop, the workmen and the cat. They came at the usual hour and proceeded in their slow, rhythmic manner.

The oldest son took charge. A silent youth, he made quick decisions and acted the part of boss as if he had done nothing else in his life. A bit clumsy

in his movements but never doubtful. The young boss was on his feet three hours after midnight and worked hard till after sunset, tending to cattle, the butcher shop and the slaughter house.

Grandmother looked after the candle shop. There she sat all day watching the wicks being lowered, a dozen at a time, into square wooden vats full of hot tallow. Slowly the wicks would go down into the white hot tallow and come out with a thin layer of tallow clinging to their thin long bodies. This was repeated many times, till the desired size was attained. There she would sit and dream of her husband on horseback, the long whip in his hand, disappearing between the hills.

Months passed and no word came from Cuna. All were getting anxious, rumors began sneaking through the town. Cuna was dead, Cuna was killed by robbers, drowned in the Danube, shot at Plevna. Two soldiers returned, wounded. They had heard nothing of either Cuna or the cattle. Grandmother wept more than usual and her cries would rise whenever she happened to see the big empty armchair at the head of the table. The eldest son spoke less and worked harder.

The two soldiers would come around regularly every afternoon and tell of the horrible scenes they had witnessed at the front. One delighted in describing scattered brains and dried blood on skulls and stones. The other described the long bayonets of the Turks or the moon-like yattaguns, "sharp like a ra-

zor." Grandmother sat there, cried, and served tea and things to the two heroes, who found in her a good listener. There were no doubts left in her mind as to the end of her husband. She would see and talk to no one but the two soldiers, who had at least seen the spot where her husband died.

She was greatly surprised one morning, when a courier arrived and brought a letter from Cuna, who was only two days behind the courier. Immediately she ran to the candle dipping shop, shouting the news to all on her way. There she made two large bundles of candles and brought them to the spacious synagogue near the top of the hill. The attendant, the "shamass," could not understand what she said and gesticulated, but he took the candles and promised to place them in the best candelabra, near the altar. Grandmother swam in a sea of emotion, and was deaf to the earnest stories of the two heroes.

\* \* \* \* \*

Three heavy creaking carts and loud men stopped in front of the house at midnight. Grandmother, half clad, ran out of the house, followed after some time by the eldest son, he with the tall boots, serious face and silent as a stone. Grandmother wept and laughed and talked. Grandfather was changed. His face was sunburned but thin, he was old and bent and spoke in a sad, soft manner. Four men carried two copper kettles full of Austrian and Russian gold coins into the house. All the men climbed into the carts, and after a short talk with grandfather, left for their homes. Grandfather, aided by the eldest son, put the copper kettles into the huge brick bake-oven. He answered none of the questions put by his wife, but looked tenderly into her eyes now

and then. Most of the time he kept his eyes on the floor.

They thought his queer behavior due to weariness, and urged him to go to bed. He claimed he could not sleep, and sat down in his usual seat at the head of the long, heavy table, made of oak. There was a heavy mood in the room. Somehow, instead of joy, bad news was on the way. Grandmother thought it was money matters. She wanted to know how much he had lost. But he had gained more than expected. "Are you sick?" she demanded. "No," came the decisive answer. "Well, what happened, why don't you speak, are you not glad to be home with your wife and children, why are you sad?"

Money, wife and children had no connection with his sadness. He had made a discovery, men were bad, they were mean without reason. Grandmother sighed, she knew, the two soldiers had told her. She attempted to repeat some of the things the soldiers had related to her in great detail, but her husband would not listen. He shook his head, these things he knew and expected. Again there was silence, and the big-bearded man sat back in his chair, dropped his head forward on his chest, so that his nose was hid in his beard.

No one spoke for some time, only his wife sighed now and then. She was very nervous now, and close to bursting into tears. Cuna grunted, shook his head and slapped the table with his broad palm. Both son and wife looked up, but no other sound came to clear the air. More time passed. Grandmother decided to change things. She intended to go over and caress her husband, run her hand through his long hair. As she was about to carry out her plan, Cuna threw his head back,

sighed and said aloud, as if repeating something he had said to himself many times: "Would I had been blind, would I had been blind." His fist struck the brown oak table with force and shaking his head he repeated the sentence again and again.

Grandmother began to weep and moan softly. Both men were breathing heavily and attempted to disregard the woman. The eldest son sat upright on a hard bench and looked out of the nearest window. The deep blue night was getting pale. The lamp shone with less strength. The early risers were heard between the woman's sobs. The big, heavy man bent forward suddenly, and with clenched fists began to speak, almost in monosyllables. He made a long pause after each sentence. At no time did he look up.

The horrors of the front he had expected. Both sides seemed willing. Both sides were armed and either side could quit under certain conditions. Besides, it was all child's play after he had seen this terrible thing before he got to the front. He had crossed the Danube without a loss and the men and the cattle were resting. He was asked to go to a nearby town to complete the deal with the quartermaster's department. He was accompanied by two soldiers. They met many wounded men returning from the front, most of them in carts, some on foot. At certain intervals Turkish prisoners with their dark skin drawn in wrinkles over their tired bones, passed by. The returning soldiers were a boisterous lot, and many fights took place among those who walked home and who were only slightly wounded.

Toward evening the road became deserted. The two soldiers had orders not

to stop until they had reached headquarters. From one side of the road came piercing shrieks. Grandfather wanted to investigate, but the soldiers reminded him of their orders. The shrieking continued, and soon he persuaded the soldiers to turn back for a few moments. All three jumped over the wide moat that ran on each side of the road. After passing a few trees they came into a great level meadow. Here the big, hairy man stopped a little longer and drew a deep breath as men do when they are about to dive. "Would I had been blind. They were boys from our town. Our boys. Two sons of decent people. Think!"

Someone knocked at the door and entered without being asked. It was Ioan Doina and his wife Garofa, one of the men who had made the trip with the cattle. Ioan turned to his wife and said: "Did I not tell you?" and then addressing grandmother, added: "For the last two months I have heard nothing else from this man. Day and night he talks of it. He does not sleep, he does not eat, he is going mad."

"They were our boys, boys from our village," said Cuna in half pleading, half threatening voice. Both men looked each other in the face, and there was silence. Ioan turned about, took his wife's sleeve, and edged his way out of the room. Cuna's wife followed slowly. Father and son, left alone, sat like two monuments for many hours. Some one knocked at the door, the son opened, and in came the two soldiers who had entertained the mother with their heroic tales. They greeted Cuna, who looked frightened, rose suddenly, and shouted to his son: "Take them out, take them out. Don't ever let them

touch my threshold again." The eldest son, with stiff steps and outstretched arms, like an advancing wall, saw them out. He followed only a few inches behind them, without touching their clothes.

WILLIAM SAPHIER.

## BLUEBEARD

"Remember!" he repeated, menacingly. "All but the room with the green door!" With that, he left her.

She went at once to the room with the green door, and, with the aid of a hairpin, instantly opened it. Breathlessly, she tiptoed in. . . . The door gave onto a plainly furnished sitting-room; its only occupants an old mother cat and a lively litter of kittens.

After a moment of surprised silence: "Are they not cute!" she softly cried; and for the rest of the afternoon she played with them, like a child.

Thus occupied, her husband came upon her. His brow clouded.

"I have found you out!" she laughed into his frowning face. "Under that gruff exterior, under that curious mask, under those long blue whiskers, you conceal a kind heart. . . . I have found you out!"

"So!" he cried, fiercely. "You are like the rest. Their fate shall be yours. . . . Now that you know, these shall be given the run of the house. You have brought it upon yourself!"

He left her swooning.

After stepping on kittens unto the third and fourth generation, she took her life, terribly, behind the green door.

STEPHEN HUGUENOT.

The cards of life are so well stacked that when a player wins we attribute it to his skill.



## AS MEN TURN TAILOR

As men for pastime may direct their wit  
As they see fit  
And thus turn tailor or green-groceryman  
For their life's span—  
As men turn tailor for their life's pastime,  
I turn my hand to rhyme.

Poets be damn'd! if by that word be meant  
Lean, shaggy devils who will pay no rent,  
Belaboring the world because it still  
Cares no two hoots in hell  
For any dream  
That they may deem  
Fit subject for a canticle—  
Lean, shiftless devils who have never yet  
Earned silver with a decent sweat,  
Yet deafen heaven with astounding cries,  
Storming for pennies which the world denies.

Not mine to spin long garments of regret  
In rhymes that fret,  
And, when the night's too long,  
Whimper a whining song  
Not mine to draw aside  
With sullen songs of pride  
Because I dream the world has done me wrong.

As men turn tailor for their life's pastime,  
I turn my hand to rhyme.  
And whether the world cares  
Or not, for my small wares  
Makes very trifling difference to me.  
With delicate, deft stitches  
I fashion little breeches  
For casual customers of my fantasy.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## In Terms of Food

I can remember sitting stiffly, a very little boy, at the polished mahogany board in the high ancestral dining-room in Ware, surrounded by an atmosphere heavy with the dignity of viands.

My mother set what was called, in the aristocratic New England of that day, a "bountiful" table. Cousins and indigent satellites galore came to replenish their meagre systems with the red meats and roast poultry and, upon occasion, game; the rich brown gravies; the vegetables in heaped, buttered mounds; the thick, steaming soups and aldermanic puddings. There was always more than plenty; and over the daily feast presided my mother and grandmother, *grandes dames* of a long descent, with something of Chinese benignity and a fine appreciation of their own importance.

As a trencherman, my father had no standing. His abstemiousness was laid, in an apologetic manner, to an old dyspepsia—dyspepsia being one of the genteel diseases. It was incomprehensible to the ladies of his household, and to me as their small pupil, that he should eat but little, by intellectual preference.

My grandfather, a valid aristocrat, had a red face and many odd little gustatory tricks. He and his red-faced friends—one of whom owned a gold dinner-service presented by a Reigning Monarch—depended heavily on dining at the same hour every evening, and took their toddies solemnly at midday at a mellow old bar near the centre of the city. They thought long and much, I now understand, about their food and

liquor. Some of them died untimely deaths, from thinking too much about it.

My father was a self-made man—a fact never forgotten by his wife's family. His contempt for food (I now know) was regarded by them as evidence of low breeding. They endeavored to conceal that aspect of it, even from each other, but never with entire success. It was a skeleton, a lamentable fact ignored so far as possible by persons of gentle birth and cultivation.

I see again my father urging a second plateful of roast capon on my grandmother. He had the suavity of a Marquis de Caux, when he chose. No doubt it was a complete revenge for him for many slights, to see the proud old lady's greediness step to the front with sparkling eyes. But at that time I did not know. I thought it "queer" of him to be different. For breakfast he ate only one egg. Strange! My mother shrugged her shoulders—"Your father's way!" We all shrugged our shoulders more or less, from my grandmother to the last, most indigent cousin.

But with care; for my father was not only the source of supplies, but owner of a wit that nicked the hide where it struck.

I was allowed to have my own whims about food, provided that I ate enough. I liked fried potatoes better than mashed; "loved" waffles, "hated" egg-plant. One sometimes heard:

"Oh, don't have stewed corn. Stevie likes it on the cob!"

It is possible that if I had not been

jolted from the nest at an early age, I too would have grown up an aristocrat.

I cannot tell exactly at what period of my life the importance of food began definitely to recede. I must have eaten heavily at boarding-school, but never, I am sure, so thoroughly to the exclusion of other activities as modern writers of school stories would persuade us is the hobbledehoy habit.

I remember Sweet-Potato Minnie, ladler-out of helpings at the House on the Hill; Chatham's Jelly Lunch; and of later date, The Agate, where Muriel the Beautiful Scandinavian held forth to the titillation of adolescent yearnings. It seems to me, however, as I look back, that I leaned more heartily toward raw whiskey, at that stage of development, than toward any special kind of food.

Tante Manhattan would have taught me catholicity in appetite, if I had not learned before. In those days (1903-1904) there was an eating-place on 23rd Street at which one could buy dinner for twenty cents. They served what they could for the price, and one ate it and was thankful, or left it and starved. It was not so coarse or dirty as food I had eaten on cattle-ships, nor so good as that at which sons of ill-to-do parents had scoffed in the College Commons. It merely served its purpose; one does not scorn boiled beets if they will fill an aching void.

At what meals have I assisted since then, without paying separate homage to the food itself, its delicacy or variety!

There was the dinner at Antoine's, beginning with the unique cocktails and proceeding, through the marvellous smoky oysters and I have forgotten

what besides, to repletion and the inspired exclamation of Fleurette the Fair, as that frail one lifted humid eyes to mine:

"Oh, Gregory, how good that was!"

In a second she had corrected herself, but the error was incontestable—she had said Gregory instead of Stephen, and Gregory was a thousand miles away from New Orleans.

Often with Fleurette there was a sense of eating in the presence of a squad of other men and women, her by-gone friends and mine. After a silence we looked up and met each other's eyes, and in the merging gazes old memories were afloat. Our glances fell in embarrassment while we made hurried conversation anent the probable favorite in the next day's fourth race.

Nevertheless, I sat pleasantly at table many times with her. Remembrance clings of little tricks, pleasantries of a languid woman versed in love. The soft eyes, with speculative treachery always lurking in their depths, the long hands, fashioned to be caressed, but robbed of character by the fervid clasping of too many men! A beautiful woman with a vapid smile, foolish, unfortunate; cursed with a vein of moral feeling too strong to let her be entirely unmoral, and an unmoral nature too weak to engulf the moral vein.

Her tricks linger, but the food is forgotten—my privilege! Good chickens, and one bad one, at the Louisianne... We did not like the Sazerac, an acquired taste; and I thought that the fizzes of Ramos overrated... Adieu, Fleurette. Good luck, good appetite, good hunting! (I wonder if you betrayed your temper to the young aviator, down there in New Mexico. You

wouldn't like frijoles much, I imagine.)

At Counterfeiters' Castle above Quaramaug, they used to serve a gorgeous dinner, after the sun went down behind the pines across the lake. Most of the dishes I cannot recall—a specialty was grenouilles—but the liquid refreshments were beyond cavil. Persons of all kinds met there: the fat female fancier of Griffons, the dramatic professor's wife (on the sly), Toinette l'Anson's husband and indestructible mother, and that naval pill-peddler who wrote back from France to his wife to keep his memory green if he was killed in battle for his country.

Ostensibly the place was a kennels. Hemming, the smug proprietor, wore boots and sometimes joined the general conversation. Once when he was sitting at the table, Lil Kennedy, very drunk, described at length her strain of bird-hunting bull terriers, and the company went mad. He thought the insult an intentional one—you should have seen his purple face... On the east veranda of the Castle, where steps went down to the canoes, Dolores Costa tried to murder me with a Burgundy bottle, and did thereby convince me of the vitality of one of Turgenieff's types, previously unreal to me... Sometime, actions of living women may persuade me of the possible reality of Galsworthy's—to descend from the heights to mediocrity in a single penful.

The Kennedy is now mad; the Costa, repatriate. Little Flower o' the Corn, the life of the party, who used to dance most generously upon the table-top—ah, the poetry of her silken legs!—while dawn came stealing up the valley, has married a man to whom she confessed her past, and gone to swallow

peas and mutton in Brooklyn. She who drove a team of seven, including two soldiers, with gay insouciance, now doubtless worries about a broken sauce-dish... The doggy Hemming overreached himself at last, and probably the grenouilles are honking undisturbed in Quaramaug.

The War, the tripe in the fashion of Caen, terrible stuff! There was a near-soldier from my native town, for whom I ordered mussels in Bordeaux, without his knowing what they were. They came, he saw, they conquered... "Schicoree." It was the only salad that they had, and after some Parisian days of it, one felt all curly. Simple Major Johnny Felton ate it at Papa Germain's, solemnly, nervously, thinking with longing of his plump wife at home, and giggling in abrupt falsetto when the French gels made eyes at him.

An interminable table d'hôte at the *Hotel du Grand Faisan* in Tours. Curse the waiter, will he never take away the soup? Would that they had sent all waiters early to the Front! But patience; he has been doing this for thousands of nights, his forbears before him and he, and will be doing it, he and his progeny, after we are dead. There is a fixity about waiters, especially the French, and particularly at the *Hotel au Grand Faisan*, that old, respectable hostelry, in the old, not-so-respectable city beside the rushing Loire. Always the guests complain, and come again—the same complaints, the same guests, the same waiters, the same hotel. It is the Gallic genius of Habit, persistent as death itself... *Les Américains*, the gawks, are only incidents.

Always the same rigmarole at Tours, early in the morning. Scene: the little



tin bar in the curve of the arm of the Place du Palais. Enter Yankee savior, to native mopping bar.

"D'cone-yack ,veet! Ke shay swof c'mattang!"

"Pardon, m'sieu, pas de cognac, c'est defendu, vous le savez bien."

"Ah, ah, n'mockay par, goddam! D'cone-yack, zhe voo pree, tood sweet, mantenong, oray voo?"

Three cognacs, and then *des oeufs sur le plat* at Madame Cinquante's, with frightful coffee. At noon, a wonderful dejeuner in the dining-room of Madame Lefebvre's pension bourgeois—wonderful, until *les officiers Américains* trouped in en masse and wrecked the pension.

Jeanne was the waitress, an altruist, very thin, small, tired in body, but smiling. She was to be married, no one seemed to know why, except that it had been arranged. Her grey eyes were kind and cool, too fine for marriage with a lout. It was like soaking sweet peas in a barrel of sack... Dinner on the Rue Nationale, usually, and a kettle of Vouvray... Angry foam under *Espagne's* bows; boards on the table-edges; and draw poker in the second smoking-room, against Bull Snyder and five morons, while the lights sway. We leave the War behind us before we touch America, where it never existed.

Fraternal banquets in New England, served by grim daughters of the Star admitted to the precincts for the purpose. Ice cream and large soft cake, with orange filling oozing from between the layers. Night upon night, descendants of the Pilgrims in rural New England swallow that layer cake, with no

variety save in the color and in the flavor of the filling...

A quack persuaded me to live for a year on milk and nuts and grass. It can be done; and after the adventure, one never returns completely to the former attitude toward food.

I understand perfectly, now, my father's single egg. Though I no longer practice the doctrines of quackery—on the contrary, Tante Manhattan's flesh-pots make a brisk appeal to me—I have the safe, comfortable feeling of the man to whom pertains the buried ace. It will never be said of me truthfully, as I once heard an eminent pastor declare of a confrere, defunct:

"He dug his grave with his teeth."

I can take it or let it alone—rich food, I mean. And consider how many cannot! Gaze with me at the patrons of a well-known restaurant, behold them in terms of food. Perchance you have not noticed how much their fodder means to them.

Those four males—I will not call them men—at yonder table, for example. What elbow-play; and their very hides are stretched with gluttony. Sometimes I think the celebrated dismissals of the Human Race by Swift and Balfour are too weak, the mere pratings of incorrigible optimists... And that high-colored female with the aged rake. She has told him that his lack of consideration spoils her lunch, that her appetite is gone; and she is pursuing vol-au-vents of sweetbread with artichoke and hollandaise, and a huge pear Condé... The quaint mixed foursome in the corner grows riotous. The waiter has chilled the wine too much, and forgotten to give Alfred a



fork. Alfred is stuffed like a forced fowl, his eye is dull, his fat hand flabby, his liver will deal him the death-blow soon; but he must have his fork when he wants it, poor laddie. Mabel's arms are like special Hoch-Deutsch sausages in shiny skins. The bracelet that George gave her two Christmases ago bites shrewdly into the gross flesh.

Heart of my Heart, I love you—deal me some more prune whip. Kiss me again, my dearest, and do you think our venison hangs tender on the butcher's hook by now?... T. Shandy's mother and the familiar clock.

Doubtless competent second-rate

novelists of the Sienkiewicz-Blasco Ibanez order will continue to shock us, between meals, with chapters on orgies of flamingo-tongues. Petronius was a dissolute dog, and the Romans generally in Spain and elsewhere were decadent fellows. But our own civilization is aging, and human nature remains the same. How long will it be, one queries, before we are compelled to acknowledge a condition in which, in the face of an all-conquering invading army, we would sacrifice, for immunity, all except palates?

I bow.

STEPHEN TA VAN.

## ELECTROCUTION

A foam of lightning breaks on the barred pane.  
He shudders: *voltage.....stretches you apart*  
*As it does bleeding roots, and trunks that start*  
*And twist alive and writhe up off the plain*  
*Like threads of tortured silver.....* But the guards—  
Monstrous deft dolls that move as on a string—  
In wonted haste to finish with this thing,  
Turn faces blanker than asphalted yards.

They hear the shriek that tore out of its sheath  
But as a feeble moan... yet dare not breathe,  
Who stare there at him, arching—like a tree  
When the winds wrench it and the earth holds tight—  
To fuse in flaming circuit with the night  
His soul, expanding with white agony.

LOLA RIDGE.

# BAGATELLE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT.

"..... et le comble de la finesse était de se surprendre l'un ou l'autre à recevoir une bagatelle sans prononcer le mot sacramentel."—Balzac.

Persons: Shabiyah, *The Gazelle*.

Kasim, *The Philosopher*.

Faroun, *The Husband*.

*Scene: The interior of an Arab's tent on the edge of the desert. At the spectator's right is a divan composed of saddle-bags, carpets and pillows. At his right, a large chest. A mirror of burnished copper hangs on the tent wall back of chest. The only entrance and exit is a door, at center rear, screened by a flap of the tent so that it cuts off from the interior the glare of the sun.*

*As the curtain rises, SHABIYAH is seated cross-legged on the divan, playing a lute. She puts down the lute, yawns, listens, and hearing someone, goes to back of tent to look out.*

SHABIYAH

*(Seeing someone, after a pause speaks)*

In Allah's name, wilt thou not rest in the shade?

KASIM

*(In the doorway).*

There is no God but Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful! I came hither because of the palm-tree.

SHABIYAH

This tent has spread itself in the shadow of the palm tree. Rest in its shade.

KASIM

*(Following her into tent)*

I hear and obey.

SHABIYAH

Tell me, O youth, what is thy name?

KASIM

My name is Kasim.

SHABIYAH

O Kasim, rest on these carpets.

*(She brings a basin and ewer of copper and pours water over his hands).*

SHABIYAH

*(Placing before him a tray containing a dish of fresh dates and a vessel of milk and a cup)*

O Kasim, eat of these fruits for we have no other meat, and fear nothing from me.

*(Kasim eats. He then washes his hands and mouth in the same manner as before but more thoroughly.)*

SHABIYAH

Now thou hast eaten, O Kasim, tell me whence thou art and how camest thou hither.

KASIM

O damsel. . . .

SHABIYAH

Thou mayest call me Shabiyah.

KASIM

O Shabiyah, know that I am of the city of Cairo and that I am travelling toward Bagdad with a company of merchants who have halted not far from this place.

SHABIYAH

Thou art a merchant?

KASIM

I am a philosopher.

SHABIYAH

By Allah, thou art young for a philosopher!

KASIM

Indeed, I am no ordinary philosopher.

SHABIYAH

What marvel is this!

KASIM

Know, O Shabiyah, that of philosophers there are two kinds; ordinary philosophers, who are frequently bold and always tedious; and extraordinary philosophers, whose wisdom is the flower of observation and the fruit of experience. *(He draws from his vest a book which he reads.)*

*(Pause.)*

SHABIYAH

Thy book—O philosopher of the age—since it appears the sole object worthy of attention; permit me to ask the name of the science it treats?

KASIM

This book is beyond the understanding of women.

*(Pause, during which Kasim reads while Shabiyah watches him from under her eyelashes.)*

SHABIYAH

My husband is away.

KASIM

Thy husband . . .

SHABIYAH

Faroun . . . He is gone to the bazaar.

KASIM

*(Neglecting his book.)*

Ah!

SHABIYAH

He is buying a gold chain.

KASIM

Buys he this chain for thee, O gazelle?

SHABIYAH

Yes and no. It will be mine only if I win it from him at Bagatelle.

KASIM

Bagatelle?

SHABIYAH

Bagatelle. Thou hast never played it?

KASIM

No.

SHABIYAH

O Kasim, it is a game played for a forfeit. The players are two; the forfeit whatever they agree on. My Faroun and I have agreed to play for a gold chain.

KASIM

How does one play this game?

SHABIYAH

To win the forfeit—one must surprise whomever one is playing with, into accepting a key, a flower, a book—some bagatelle!—without that other saying the word “bagatelle.”

KASIM

Shall we play Bagatelle?

SHABIYAH

Agreed; and for what forfeit?

KASIM

Do thou name it.

SHABIYAH

The ruby on thy finger.

KASIM

This ring? *(holding it up).*

SHABIYAH

In the name of Allah, yes.

KASIM

I would not part with it for a thousand dirhams.

SHABIYAH

Has it a history?

KASIM

This ring was given me by a most beautiful and wise lady, with the words “O Kasim, I have taught thee all I know; there is nothing more we can teach thee.”

SHABIYAH

Allah is all-knowing. Let us play for the ring?



KASIM

So be it.

SHABIYAH

It is agreed; and Allah is my witness. O Kasim, remember—Take nothing at my hand without at the same time saying the all-important word . . .

KASIM

Not even a kiss? (*He kisses her hand, exclaiming Bagatelle!*)

SHABIYAH

(*Laughing*)

Thou hast learned but the half of thy lesson, seeing that a kiss is not a bagatelle . . . (*Affecting surprise.*) But tell me? . . . Thou art no longer reading!

KASIM

I was distracted by thy beauty and grace.

SHABIYAH

Needs must thou tell me of this book? Verily my patience is at an end on thy account.

KASIM

(*Drawing a deep breath*)

I am the author of this work but the subject matter is not of mine invention—It is a collection of all the tricks, rogueries, ruses and wiles that women have invented and of which they are capable.

SHABIYAH

What! . . . All? . . .

KASIM

Yes. . . . All.

SHABIYAH

And is thy book the flower of observation?

KASIM

It is even so.

SHABIYAH

And the fruit of thine own experience?

KASIM

Thou hast said it.

SHABIYAH

Hast thou forgotten the whole or a part of thy wisdom?

KASIM

How so?

SHABIYAH

Why wast thou reading, then?

KASIM

To avoid temptation.

SHABIYAH

And now?

KASIM

I seek thy beauty and grace for thy face beams with light, thy cheeks are rose-red and thine eyelids languorous.

SHABIYAH

(*Slyly.*)

Hast thou no fear that I play thee a trick *not* in thy collection?

KASIM

No, for through the constant study of women I have arrived at a state where I no longer fear them.

SHABIYAH

Ah . . .

(*Pause.*)

SHABIYAH

Philosopher of the age?

KASIM

What wouldst thou, garden of delights?

SHABIYAH

O Kasim, I would have thee abide with me a while that thou mayest tell me thy history and acquaint me with the rare adventures that have come to thy knowledge . . .

KASIM

What? All!

SHABIYAH

Yes . . . All.

KASIM

So be it. But, ere I begin. I will enact an adventure . . .

SHABIYAH

What tale is this?

KASIM

By Allah, my heart is well-nigh torn in sunder with longing for thee; nor will I let half the day pass ere I possess thee and take my fill of thy beauty and grace.

SHABIYAH

Bethink thee what thou wilt do.

KASIM

How so?

SHABIYAH

Belike it may come to my husband's ears, and who will deliver us from his hand . . .

KASIM

Is not thy husband at the bazaar?

SHABIYAH

Yes.

KASIM

How will he know of this? *(He kisses her mouth.)* Thy hair is like the nights of estrangement and separation and thy face like the days of union . .

SHABIYAH

*(Breaks from his embrace, sits upright, listens).*

Didst thou not hear?

KASIM

What?

*(She goes to door of tent and listens.)*

SHABIYAH

*(Startled).*

It is his horse! My husband will be here in a moment!

KASIM

*(Jumps from divan. His book, unnoticed, falling to floor right of divan).*

SHABIYAH

He is as jealous as a tiger and as pitiless. If Faroun find you here, he

will kill us both.

*(Kasim starts for door.)*

SHABIYAH

*(Divining his intent).*

Hasten not to destroy thyself. He will see thee . . . *(with a flash of inspiration.)* The chest—there is nothing for it but that thou hide in the chest!

*(Kasim hesitates.)*

SHABIYAH

Art thou afraid?

KASIM

Yes.

SHABIYAH

By Allah and if thou valuest thy life, quick, hide in this chest.

KASIM

*(Getting into chest)*

I commit my affair unto Allah for no one can avoid what he hath decreed.

SHABIYAH

*(Locks chest with key which she attaches again to her girdle; glances around the tent and sees the book).*

SHABIYAH

*(Shoving the book under the divan with her foot).*

And it be the will of Allah, I will show thee a trick not in thy book!

*(She adds Kohl to her eyelids and a little more red to her lips, and is ready, a few seconds later, to receive, with a thousand blandishments, Faroun, who enters).*

SHABIYAH

O my Lord and light of mine eyes . .

FAROUN

*(Fondling her).*

Gazelle.

SHABIYAH

Blessed be Allah and his Prophet, thou art returned sooner than I expected.

FAROUN

Gazelle, I had not come but out of longing for the sight of thy face, for I must again to the bazaar on a matter of business (*sits on divan*).

SHABIYAH

Wilt thou partake of some refreshment?

FAROUN

What is there?

SHABIYAH

Dates and milk.

FAROUN

I am not hungry. I will smoke my nargileh.

(*Faroun proceeds to smoke the nargileh while Shabiyah seats herself on a cushion not far from his feet*).

FAROUN

Tell me, gazelle, how hast thou passed the time during mine absence!

SHABIYAH

(*Fervently*).

There is no power and no virtue but in Allah, the most high, the Sublime!

...

FAROUN

Hast thou some rare story to tell me or some marvel to make known to me?

SHABIYAH

(*Quietly and with perfect self-possession*).

There is nothing for it but that I tell thee the whole truth, hiding naught of a singular adventure that befell me . . .

FAROUN

I am listening, my gazelle.

SHABIYAH

There came here a kind of philosopher, who claims that he has collected into a book all the tricks, rogueries, ruses and wiles that women have invented and of which they are capable . . .

FAROUN

I am listening.

SHABIYAH

And this philosopher is a goodly youth with shining face and slender shape, black eyes and joined eye-brows . . .

FAROUN

Go on, I am listening . . .

SHABIYAH

(*With animation*).

He was ardent, impetuous—he threw his arms about me, and . . .

FAROUN

(*Terrible*)—And?

SHABIYAH

Thou camest in time to save my faltering virtue.

FAROUN

(*Bounds from the divan, a long knife in his hand. Shabiyah falls at his feet*).

FAROUN

(*Taking her by the hair*).

Where is this dog? Produce him to my sight!

SHABIYAH

(*Embracing his knees*).

Thou wilt not kill me?

FAROUN

(*Threatening her with the knife*).

By Allah, if thou wouldst live, speak—where is this dog?

SHABIYAH

(*With a glance as prompt as it is timid*)  
The chest.

FAROUN

(*Taking a stride toward the chest*).

Ah! . . .

SHABIYAH

(*Proffering the key, her eyes down-cast*).

It is locked . . .

FAROUN

(*Snatches the key from her hand; runs toward the chest and is on the*

*point of inserting the key in the lock when he is stopped by an explosion of laughter from Shabiyah).*

SHABIYAH

*(Swaying with delight).*

The chain, the chain! Give me the gold chain! Thou hast forgotten the bagatelle thou snatched from me! . . .

*(The key drops to the floor.)*

FAROUN

By the heart of the Prophet! . . .

SHABIYAH

Thou hast lost thy chain. O Faroun, give it me. Have I not won it?

FAROUN

Thou hast indeed won it *(He goes toward her with the chain, his knife no longer visible)*. O subtlest of gazelles, here is thy chain. Another time, play no such cruel trick . . .

SHABIYAH

*(Taking the chain)*

My Faroun, it is not easy to catch thee; thou hast usually a better memory . . .

FAROUN

Play me no such trick again, and I will bring thee the wealth of all the caravans that pass in a year. *(He starts to go).*

SHABIYAH

*(Arranging her hair before the mirror.)*

What, art thou leaving?

FAROUN

Yes.

SHABIYAH

O my husband, let this suffice thee of ignoble suspicion and never again deem ill of me.

FAROUN

So be it.

SHABIYAH

*(Approaching him).*

Accord me pardon for what is past.

FAROUN

Allah grant thee grace!

SHABIYAH

Be absent but a little while, O Faroun for I cannot endure to be parted from thee even for an hour.

*(Faroun goes).*

SHABIYAH

*(Listens to make sure that he is gone; then, picking up the key, she unlocks and opens the chest).*

*(Kasim's head and shoulders appear. He is pale and trembling).*

SHABIYAH

*(In a whisper).*

He is gone . . .

KASIM

*(Getting out of chest).*

Ah.

SHABIYAH

Praised be Allah who hath made the affair to end well; and we implore the Almighty to crown his favors with thy safe faring forth this place.

KASIM

Is the way clear?

SHABIYAH

Yes.

KASIM

*(Starting to go).*

Farewell.

SHABIYAH

What, art thou going too?

KASIM

*(In a flutter to be gone).*

By Allah, yes.

*(He has reached the door when he stops.)*

SHABIYAH

Thy book—delay a little—thou hast forgotten thy book!

KASIM

*(Feeling in his vest).*

Ah *(Coming toward her).* Give it



me that I may go my way, for I will no longer in this place.

SHABIYAH

I hear and obey.

*(Shabiyah gets the book from under the divan. Kasim snatches it eagerly from her hands and starts for the door.)*

SHABIYAH

Stay, in the name of Allah, there is something else! . . .

KASIM

*(Startled).*

What?

SHABIYAH

Thou hast forgotten *we* are playing Bagatelle.

Did I not warn thee—"Take nothing from my hand without at the same time saying the all-important word."

KASIM

In the name of Allah . . .

SHABIYAH

The ruby—the ruby on thy finger. Thou promised it and Allah is witness of what I say.

KASIM

I promised no less a forfeit; therefore, it is thine. *(Drawing it from his finger).* Here . . . take it.

SHABIYAH

*(Taking the ring).*

How beautiful it is—it will remind me of thee! Wilt thou not stay?

KASIM

No.

SHABIYAH

Art thou afraid?

KASIM

I mistrust thee.

SHABIYAH

Come, tell me, how dost thou like my chain?

KASIM

Would I had never seen thee.

SHABIYAH

O Kasim, have I played thee a trick not in thy book?

KASIM

One glance at thee has cost me a thousand sighs for indeed thou hast ravished my wit. Farewell.

SHABIYAH

Delay a little. My Faroun is away for hours at a time and there is seldom here a philosopher to delight mine ears. Wilt thou not stay?

KASIM

Why should I?

SHABIYAH

Stay and see. I will give thee thy ring again.

KASIM

Not for the ruby together with thy gold chain would I stay . . .

SHABIYAH

I will give thee a kiss.

KASIM

Not even a kiss. Farewell . . .

SHABIYAH

Philosopher of the age?

KASIM

*(Turning at door).*

What wouldst thou now of me?

SHABIYAH

Forget not to include this Bagatelle in thy collection.

*(Kasim goes).*

CURTAIN.

LOUIS GILMORE.

All the thoughts of a turtle are turtle.  
—Emerson.



## Dowson and The Catholic Note in The Nineties

"Whom the Gods love, Death does not cleave  
nor smite,  
But like an angel with soft trailing wing,  
He gathers them upon the hush of night  
With voice and beckoning."

**M**EAGRE and for the most part unsympathetic, have been the various critiques and accounts of Ernest Dowson, severally dubbed the Chopin of Poetry and the Burns of the Nineties.

Of the facts of his life we are told little. He was born at Kent, England, on August 2, 1867. His great-uncle was Alfred Domett, Browning's "Waring," and himself a poet. His father had a taste for literature and lived for some time in France and on the Riviera because of poor health, Ernest being rather irregularly educated in France and thereabouts until what time he entered Queen's College, Oxford. Leaving this institution of learning in 1887 without taking a degree, he came to London and lived there intermittently several years, between visits to France, the country of his heart. The last years of his short life were spent almost entirely in Paris, Brittany and Normandy, though he died at a bricklayer's cottage in the village of Catford, England. His body was buried in the Catholic section of the Lewisham cemetery, on February 27, 1900. His delicate, wistful spirit still lives, for us, in his work.

Dowson was an early convert to the Catholic Church. But because of the inconsistency of certain of his actions

with his ideals, has been accused by more than one writer of toying with his religion or as being, rather, intoxicated with its artistic side, drunk with incense, chrisms and candles.

Such, however, is the spleen of the iconoclast. It is not given every man to live up to his ideal. The best most of us can do is not to give over altogether to the ways of the world. Wordsworth's cry "The world is too much with us!" obtains in 1920 as it did in 1820 and in 1890. "Late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers." There was little of "getting and spending," however, in poor Dowson's life, but much indeed of a laying waste of powers. Therein lay his, as many another man's mischief.

That which has been generally conceded his most admirable lyric is the "Non Sum Qualis Eram Sub Bonae Regno Cynarae."

Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips  
and mine  
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath  
was shed  
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;  
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,  
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my  
fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm  
heart beat,  
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep  
she lay;  
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth  
were sweet;  
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,  
When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:  
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my  
fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara, gone with the  
wind,

Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,  
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;  
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion;  
Yea, all the time, because the dance was  
long:

I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my  
fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger  
wine,

But when the feast is finished and the lamps  
expire,

Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is  
thine:

And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,  
Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:

I have been faithful to thee, Cynara in my  
fashion.

Here, as Arthur Symonds has it: "He has for once said everything, and he has said it to an intoxicating and immortal music." This poem has a grace, rhythm and an individuality unsurpassed by the poetry of the period, yet scattered about Dowson's work are numerous lesser lyrics which judged by one's individual reaction towards them perhaps excel the better known piece. Witness this little gem:

#### EXTREME UNCTION.

"Upon the eyes, the lips, the feet,  
On all the passages of sense,  
The anointing oil is spread with sweet  
Renewal of lost innocence.

The feet, that lately ran so fast  
To meet desire, are soothingly soled;  
The eyes that were so often cast  
On vanity, are touched and healed.

From troublous sights and sounds set free;  
In such a twilight hour of breath  
Shall one retrace his life, or see  
Through shadows, the true face of death!

Vials of mercy! Sacring oils.  
I know not where nor when I come,  
Nor through what wanderings and toils,  
To crave of you Viaticum.

Yet, when the walls of flesh grow weak,  
In such an hour, it well may be,  
Through mist and darkness, light will break,  
And each anointed sense will see."

Everard Meynell in his biography of Francis Thompson writes: "What English artist for fifty years has made a

Madonna and Child? Aubrey Beardsley made one. What poet has sung of the last sacraments? Ernest Dowson's most beautiful verses are on the Extreme Unction." It might not be amiss to indicate here that Dowson was but one of a group of young artists who embraced Catholicism during the Eighteen-Nineties. Katherine Bregy, in the *Catholic World* states that: "Not at the height of the Oxford Movement was Rome more regnant of artistic and literary England than during these curious early Nineties." Indeed, the most prominent figures of the decade, Beardsley, Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Francis Thompson, Mrs. Meynell, Henry Harland, Simeon Solomon and Oscar Wilde, were, or became, Catholics. With the exception of Mrs. Meynell, who still lives, all of these artists died comparatively young and for the most part as the result of a general taint in the atmosphere of the time. A certain duncy, over-ripe excrement, as it were, pervading men and manners. Indeed, "*Fin de Siecle*"! Looking at it from the vantage point of today, pre-war fermentation.

It has been our pleasure to have made somewhat of a study of this unique and interesting period in English literature. We first became attracted towards its quaint bizarreries through the swift, suicidal temper of its genius. There was something psychologically strange about the deliberate way with which these young men rushed into the flames of a fire they had builded with their own hands. Even as star-desirous moths, wing-weary from seeking the greater light, submit to the lure of the candle, so now did these, feeling themselves not strong enough to attain to the star of



Beauty, accept in lieu the candle of her distorted sister, Artificiality.

Aubrey Beardsley perhaps illustrates this more than any other. To him had been given such genius and technique as to have called forth the opinion that he was the greatest black and white artist since Albrecht Durer. What wasted talents were his, he himself recognized on his death bed, renouncing all that bizarre, sensuous, cryptic work which had so brought him before the public eye. But, as Edmund Spenser remains the poet's poet, will Aubrey Beardsley remain the artist's artist. His technique is superb.

In this matter of technique, Dowson also excels, being by far the truest and most finished singer of his day. A singer, who, in very truth, has given a voice to silence. A lyric of his with its beautiful heading: "O Mors! Quam Amara Est Memoria Tua Homini Pacem Habenti In Substantiis Suis—

Exceeding sorrow  
Consumeth my sad heart!  
Because tomorrow  
We must depart,  
Now is exceeding sorrow  
All my part!

Give over playing,  
Cast thy viol away;  
Merely laying  
Thine head my way:  
Prithee, give over playing,  
Grave or gay.

Be no word spoken;  
Weep nothing; klet a pale  
Silence, unbroken  
Silence prevail!  
Prithee, be no word spoken  
Lest I fail!

Forget tomorrow!  
Weep nothing; only lay  
In silent sorrow  
Thine head my way:  
Let us forget tomorrow,  
This one day!

A lyric like this, as Symons says:  
"Languid, half inarticulate, coming

from the heart of a drowsy sorrow"  
could hardly have been produced at any other time than during this self-conscious, effete period.

Dowson was more Latin than French in his affinities. Notwithstanding numerous translations from the French in both verse and prose, his art is distinctly Latin, almost Horatian in its nicety. Observe the indefinable sense of quiet and wistfulness found in this poem:

#### NUNS OF THE PERPETUAL ADORATION

Calm, sad, secure; behind high convent walls  
These watch the sacred lamp, these watch  
and pray:  
And it is one with them when evening falls,  
And one with them the cold return of day.

These heed not time; their nights and days  
they make  
Into a long, returning rosary,  
Whereon their lives are threaded for Christ's  
sake;  
Meekness and vigilance and chastity.

A vowed patrol, in silent companies,  
Life-long they keep before the living Christ  
In the dim church, their prayers and penances  
Are fragrant incense to the Sacrificed.

Outside, the world is wild and passionate;  
Man's weary laughter and his sick despair  
Entreat at their impenetrable gate:  
They heed no voices in their dream of prayer.

They saw the glory of the world displayed;  
They saw the bitter of it, and the sweet;  
They knew the roses of the world should fade,  
And be trod under by the hurrying feet.

Therefore they rather put away desire,  
And crossed their hands and came to  
sanctuary  
And veiled their heads and put on coarse attire,  
Because their comeliness was vanity.

And there they rest; they have serene insight  
Of the illuminating dawn to be:  
Mary's sweet star dispels for them the night,  
The proper darkness of humanity.

Calm, sad, secure; with faces worn and mild:  
Surely their choice of vigil is the best?  
Yea! for our roses fade, the world is wild;  
But there, beside the altar, there is rest.

In concluding, we glean from a little  
brochure long out of print, Blaikie-



Murdoch's "Renaissance of the Nineties," the following paragraph: "In the matter of human interest, the *rosa rosarum* of all the nineties is the poet, Ernest Dowson. It is strange how little justice has been given to this singer. Encyclopedists heed him not, while the Athenaeum, writing of him during his lifetime, said he 'cribs from Swinburne,' declared that his poems 'are artificial, and there is from beginning to end no new idea,' and concluded: 'Mr. Dowson knows the language fairly well if only he had something to say.' This criticism is superficial and stupid, for in general tone Dowson is far from akin to Swinburne, and his likeness to him lies only in a taste on the younger poet's part for double rhymes, and for the use of a long line. And as to the poet having no new idea, that is a merit; for poetry, as Keats writes, 'should surprise by a fine excess, and not by singularity; it should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a remembrance.' Now that, exactly, is what Dowson's best poems do. They are always natural, being sometimes like laughter, more often like tears.

And far from having nothing to say, the poet had everything to say; for he sang again and again the song of pure human feeling."

What more can be asked of a poet, but that his poems be "natural, sometimes like laughter, more often like tears?" Does not one turn to poetry, as one might to religion, in time of travail and sorrow, seeking therefrom that solace which is neither in work nor in play, and glimpsing therein the very visage of his soul?

"They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,  
Love and desire and hate;  
I think they have no portion in us after  
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges for a while, then closes  
Within a dream."

GUY SEVERIN.

Note—The lines which prelude this paper are taken from, at this writing, an uncollected poem of Dowson's "The Passing of Tennyson"; those which bring it to a close form the envoy to his first volume "Poems" and bear the heading: "Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam."

## THE ALIEN RACE

There was a flowering tree that glowed lilac against the twilight—a thing of beauty as perfect and as glamorous, on summer nights, as the new moon or a star.

"I wonder," said my Companion, as we halted before it, "if there was ever a race of men who worshipped Beauty as a god, raising their altars casually but reverently wherever they encountered her—before a flower, or before a crystal pool, or before such a tree as this, here, opening its blossoms to the moon."

# Tales of the Psychometric Reporter

## NO. 2 DIOGENES ON LANDLORDS

Charles Benson, a reporter on the "Chronicle," accidentally discovers that he possesses psychometric powers—that is, the ability to compel famous men and women in History to appear before him, provided he can hold in his hands some object that was connected with them when they were on earth. He obtained his first interview for his paper with Bacchus.

**I** RETURNED to the office of "The Chronicle" with my interview with Bacchus.

The Chief gasped after reading it and rolled out of his psychic garage.

"To tell you the truth, Benson," he said, "when I sent you out to interview Bacchus I meant to freeze you out. But you've got the greatest beat that any paper ever got in this town. Your psychometrical powers have beaten me. I know when I ought to make good. I'll appoint you Psychometric Reporter of *The Chronicle*, double your wages, give you a contract for two years, and put you down on the private bonus list."

I used to sit on the edge of the chair when talking to the Chief. Now I sank into it like a man who has come to stay, lifted a Perfecto from his private box, and spread out my legs at full length so that he could see the soles of my shoes, on one of which was printed *Excelsior!* and the other *Eureka!* I was human, and just felt like rubbing it in a little.

"Now," I said, flipping my ashes on his best office rug, "what do you think of an interview with Diogenes on landlords?"

"You mean the guy that lived in a tub and went around with a lantern looking for an honest man?"

"The same," I said. "He was the

first civilized man to solve the housing problem, the heat problem in winter and the electric fan problem in summer. He beat all the landlords in Greece, and was the only man they were afraid of. He might throw a tremendous light on the landlord problem of today. He might give us all pointers.

"Go to it!" shouted the Chief, throwing all the poetry on his desk into the wastebasket. "As long as your psychometric powers hold out you've got *carte blanche*; besides, with these dead ones there can be no libel suit. And, by the way, Benson, you can use the office Ford whenever you want to."

I was off—in the Ford. But where could I "get in touch" with Diogenes?—for one gifted with psychometrical powers must get in touch, literally, with something intimate concerning the person to be interviewed.

I thought of all the tubs and lanterns I had ever seen, but did any of them connect up with Diogenes? Not one. Legend had it that he took up his residence in a tub belonging to the Temple of the Mother of the Gods, in Athens.

Bootleg Inn was in sight, and while I was trying to figure out how well I knew the bartender there a voice from the vacant seat alongside of me startled me with "Hello, Benson!"

A man with a Greek nose, a Russian pompadour, whiskers cut à la Bernard Shaw and an enormous diamond stickpin in the shape of a tub in his tie, sat there grinning at me.

I knew it was Diogenes instinctively, but how had he appeared without psychometric touch?

Diogenes seemed to read the question in my eye, for he said:

"Remember that little marble fountain down the road where you stopped, got off and took a drink of water? You remember you put your right hand on the marble basin while leaning over to drink? Well, that chunk of marble was originally in my tub in Athens—the same tub that I went to live in when I organized the first tenants' strike against profiteering landlords that the world has ever known.

"History is right, for once, for I pinched that tub from the Temple of the Mother of the Gods. It was Aphrodite's special laundry tub, for when she went earth-junketing she had to wear things. She never owed me a grudge for it, for she had been dispossessed so many swell apartment houses in Athens that she rather stood in with me in my attempt to settle the housing problem of that day."

I kept my "benzine tub" going at a slow spin up the Westchester Turnpike, and began to interview the man who was so completely independent of landlords that he had ordered Alexander the Great, the landlord of the earth, to stand out of the sunshine when the latter asked him what he could do for him.

"How did the great Tub Strike of Athens start, Diogenes?" I asked.

"Why, the householders demanded windows in their houses so that they could see the landlord coming on his monthly round. You see the houses occupied by the middle and lower classes at that time only had skylights in them. It was nothing to have a cat drop

through into your evening soup. For these and other reasons we demanded that the landlords hack windows in our dobies. They answered by doubling the rent, just as they do today when you notify the Board of Health that the wall-paper is beginning to move out.

"I took a tub, but the others who followed me soon deserted. They only had wooden tubs, while I have a sacred marble one, which I turned into a studio apartment. Some paid the new rent rates, while others bought tents and emigrated to the Asiatic deserts.

"As soon as I got fixed up in my tub I began an essay demonstrating that the landlord was the lowest form of animal intelligence then known on the planet. A gang of landlords got wind of my essay, and when I went abroad one night with my famous lantern so as to give my essay a sort of Uplift touch they Lusked my tub and confiscated the essay."

"You are not house-hunting at present, are you, Diogenes?" I asked.

"No," he replied, refreshing himself with a slug of old Athenian ale out of a bottle concealed in his lantern under his coat. "The only way to escape landlords is to become a ghost.

"My adventures on various planes proved to me one thing—that landlords themselves become ghosts."

"What do you mean—that they never die?"

"That's just it—landlords never die. Startling thought—eh? Well, did you ever have a landlord whose death you can remember? Did you ever know anybody who ever attended a landlord's funeral? No—of course not. Landlords, you see, are not men, individuals; they are a species, and a species has a

sort of immortality, although the individuals that compose a species may pass from sight.

"There are commonly said to be twelve signs of the Zodiac," continued Diogenes, philosophically, "but there are in reality thirteen. Landlords have throughout all time appeared in batches on the earth at the time this thirteenth sign is in the ascendant."

"What is the name of this thirteenth, or landlord, sign of the Zodiac?" I asked, dropping, unconsciously, into a Say-Mr.-Bones tone.

"Apartmentia," replied Diogenes. "It is a large conglomeration of stars just beyond the Bull—or Taurus, as it is called—which is shaped exactly like one of your twenty-five family apartment houses in New York. Every one born under this sign will be a landlord. Its reappearance each year—which is somewhere around May 1st in this clime—acts directly on the psychic organization of the sons of apartmentia like the waxing and waning of the moons on the tide.

"When Apartmentia is full right overhead all landlords put up their rents in a fury—they get profit-nutty. As Apartmentia fades late in the year into the limbo of the Bull their frenzy de-

creases and they tend to become gentle and human again—some even going as far as to buy new wallpaper for the tenants."

"Will tubs ever come back into fashion again, old man?"

"They may if evictions go on. But they will be modernized. Tub villages may spring into being, just as tent cities have. They will be roofed with waterproof canvas and be huge affairs with living compartments, little doors and windows, and castors so that you can roll around from place to place.

"There may even be in time dirigible tubs, hydro-tubs and balloon-tubs. A simple means, it seems to me, of solving your present housing woes.

"So long, Benson. If you ever spend a week-end in the Fourth Dimension run in to see me—I'm just over the line of the Third Dimension—Tub No. 13, to your left. Got some old Greek bitters stored there if you'd like to sample 'em."

He was gone. I was in Yonkers.

Looking at a big piece of canvas floating in the air almost the full length of a street, I read:

"VOTE FOR TUBINSKY, CANDIDATE OF OPPRESSED TENANTS."

Was that only a psychometric coincidence?

BENJAMIN DE CASSERES.

### THE FILLE DE JOIE

There is on record in my acquaintance a *fille de joie* in a town in the West, who, dying, desired to be buried with her cheeks and brows painted for the occasion.



# Verse

THOMAS KENNEDY

## ALMOST ANY POET TO ONE PARTICULAR CHARMER.

My dear! you startle me; you speak of passion?  
I look for that in maidens more Circassian,  
More elemental, somewhat less reflecting,  
Less given to Freudian psychical dissecting.

I can not picture you aflame, aquiver,  
Eager to be an unreserving giver  
Of body, mind and heart; you are too know-  
ing—  
Have memorized the way which you are going.

You sigh, exclaim, moan, wring your hands  
and such—  
What was it Shakespeare said?—"Protest too  
much."  
Your faculties are all in perfect order;  
No straggling impulse strays across the  
border.

Suppose I dared—I'd like to—love you madly,  
Would you receive, and give like measure,  
gladly,  
Or, going home, write this within your journal:  
"Captured a poet; loves me; how infernal!"

Your beauty tempts me, but I dare not dally.  
I can not play at love with feint and sally.  
To be a pin-stock freak in your collection,  
I have no mind; I fly in self-protection.

## BLOSSOM TIME.

Wraiths of dead years make white the apple  
trees:

Poor ghosts of vanished beauty, which essay  
Once more Life's dark adventure. Soon the  
breeze

Will end their dream and scatter them away.

Happy the tanager, who does not know,  
Gay in the scarlet of his marriage dress,  
That April, underneath her flaunting show  
Of gladness, shapes new deaths for lovelli-  
ness.

PAUL ELDRIDGE

## UNTO ETERNITY!

Let us die in a rapturous embrace, beloved,  
Let us be buried mouth to mouth,  
That we may rot together,  
And mingle in the maws of worms.  
And grin with naked jaws and long teeth,  
To one another, O beloved,  
Remembering nothing.

## IVORY TOWER.

I climb the tall hollowness of me  
Until I reach the peak—  
There I squat, my elbows on my knees,  
And watch the stars, grown large as fists,  
And the moon, a giant hoop  
That acrobatic clouds try in vain to pierce.

Below me,  
Rats and red worms gnaw my roots,  
And the echo of their greedy teeth  
Shiver the tall hollowness of me  
Like the hard blows of a dull ax.

OSCAR WILLIAMS

## RAIN.

All day and all the night the rain pours  
Unending like the gray stream of the years;  
And all the night the wind's voice is hoarse,  
And a swift, thick sobbing chokes the earth;  
O great deep heart of the universe,  
What sorrow must be yours  
That has so many tears!

## Starrett's Chicago Letter

Slowly, one by one, as time moves on, the earth yields up its secret places; its mysteries fall before the restless search of man. Nothing is impossible; somewhere one's wildest dreams find their counterfeit realities; the mirage is but the reflection of something that exists some place beyond the immediate agony. Roraima surrenders its secret to the bold climber; a veil of ice is pierced, and the North Pole stands forth like any barber's standard; a child rummages in an attic, and a museum gains a priceless manuscript. An obscure destiny directs these things, no doubt. Certainly no particular objective lured me, last week, to an outlying section of Chicago, where there befel that which I have to communicate...

I have discovered the long-sought rhyme for "silver!"

There it was, over the door of a shop far out in West Madison Street, in letters more than a foot in height: H. F. W. SPILVER, DRUGGIST.

I need not press the importance of my discovery; it is obvious to all who play with rhyme. For as many years as poetry has been written in English, bards have torn their locks over the word "silver." Authors of textbooks have assured them that its harmonious twin does not exist. Yet Mr. Spilver, a charming fellow who sings bass in a local choir, has been a factor in affairs for, at least, fifty years; and the Spilvers before him go back for perhaps centuries!

Remains for attention one matter

only; the name must be immortalized so that it shall pass into the language. Let it become a synonym for apothecary. This should be easy, if poets will unite in the common cause.

The most interesting pieces of news I have heard within the month comes from Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, and concerns a Chicago poet—Thomas Kennedy, instructor in English at that seat of learning. Mr. Kennedy's enthusiasm for the literature of the eighteen-nineties has resulted in a course covering that brilliant period, which is to be given in a series of ten lectures, next year. Mr. Kennedy and Prof. Haniel Long (H, not D), head of the English department, will alternate in the lecture, and a fascinating draft of the course already has been prepared. The *fin de siècle* renaissance (or decadence, if you please) in England, America, France and Germany adequately will be discussed despite the brevity of the course.

This is an important undertaking, and the Institute is to be congratulated on its enterprise and courage. The influences that flow from the men of the nineties are largely unacknowledged, but are all about us. The tendency to relegate the great figures of the French and English group to the limbo of minor sensationalists is passing. It is to be hoped that the movement at Carnegie will help to classicize the finer works of that extraordinary moment in literature, killed by the Boer war at the very

height of its flowering. Wilde's fame is secure, and so is Beardsley's; Machen and Davidson slowly are coming to the recognition they deserve; but, save by collectors, Crackanthorpe and Dowson and Middleton and the rest are forgotten.

For the first time, the American group will be considered in its relation to the world movement, and this feature alone deserves cheers. At last, Bierce and Frank Norris and Stephen Crane are to be admitted to the colleges; at least, that is one's hope.

An Oak Park (Ill.) clergyman, Dr. William E. Barton, has leapt into the limelight as the outstanding Lincoln authority. The results of his years of patient study and research are now being given publication. Last year Doran published "The Soul of Abraham Lincoln," an exhaustive study of Lincoln's religious beliefs, and now we have "The Paternity of Abraham Lincoln," in which Dr. Barton discusses the delicate subject of Lincoln's parentage, and lays a number of ghosts. The several furtive legends current about the paternity of Lincoln definitely are exploded, and with its predecessor the volume takes its place as a remarkable contribution to the extensive Lincoln literature of the nation.

Another notable essay in *Lincolniana* appears with the imprint of Walter M. Hill of Chicago—"The Assassination of Lincoln" by E. W. Coggeshall. In Mr. Coggeshall's monograph, the complete story of the conspiracy, and the fate of all the conspirators, is told for the first time. The edition is strictly limited.

To what degree, I wonder, does Lincoln literature interest the South? Recently, a friend told me of purchasing

a Lincoln autograph from a Southern bookseller for one dollar. The bookman, said my friend, knew it was worth more, and said so, but didn't care about having it around the place! I chose to believe that the instance was an exceptional one.

The business of reviving "Reedy's Mirror" goes forward merrily. The second number of "All's Well," edited by Charles J. Finger, Reedy's friend and former associate, has come from the press, and there is reason to believe its future is assured. The old St. Louis imprint is missing. In its place is the strangest imprint of its kind in modern journalism—Gayeta Lodge, Fayetteville, Ark. That is Finger's home; but he's not running the little paper off on a hand press. The importance of the journal to Chicago is this: if all goes well, its headquarters will be removed to this city, and we shall again have a literary paper worth reading that does not come from New York or New Orleans. Where Finger got his title—"All's Well"—heaven knows. Is it Browning of Shakespeare? That is part of the mystery.

Speaking of mystery: one other has been laid. Has the fame of Laura Blackburn reached New Orleans? Possibly not. Laura Blackburn, for years, has been a valued contributor to B. L. T.'s column of sense and nonsense in the *Chicago Tribune*. Her specialty has been dainty lyrics, remote little echoes of Keats and Shelley, but thoroughly feminine. Recently, the Bookfellers published Laura's lyrics in a book, and announced a public dinner at which Laura would be present. A throng of admirers turned out, including a num-

ber of extremely curious male persons who had been ravished by Laura's chaste passion... She was called upon to speak. Whereupon up rose the two hundred-odd pounds of Charles G. Blanden, and bowed without a simper. Charles G. Blanden is Laura Blackburn.

David G. Joyce, a Chicago collector, is the owner of a Stevenson fragment of more than passing interest. It is called "Diogenes at the Savile Club," and was intended by R. L. S. to form a chapter in a once-projected satirical work. Through Frank M. Morris, the antiquarian bookseller, the delightful trifle is to be privately printed in a limited edition, for the friends of Mr. Joyce. Doubtless Mr. Joyce will be astonished by the number of his friends.

Llewellyn Jones, literary editor of the *Evening Post*, now has taken the platform, the better to assail Amy Lowell and acclaim Walter de la Mare. Sandburg has been lecturing for some time. In both cases, women's clubs to date have been the chiefest gainers. The combination on one platform would be exhilarating, for, without sacrificing an early friendship, they have contrived to become known as leading exponents of widely separated poetry doctrines... For mentioning these gentlemen in this

connection, I receive 10 per cent of the gate receipts, in the event of an engagement resulting from my notice.

By some Napoleonic *coup d'état*, details of which are lacking, a split in the grand opera cabinet has been precipitated. Whatever the reason, the outcome is happy, for at the head of affairs, now, is Mary Garden, the first woman director in the history of the art. Herbert M. Johnson, who resigned, may be retained as business manager. Gino Marinuzzi, who resigned as artistic director, remains the leading conductor of the organization. But the general manager, as well as the bright and shining star of the singing corps, is Mary Garden. A victrola record of the row that preceded the turn-over would be worth listening to, one fancies.

A final word, which I shall extend to several words before spring: watch for Ben Hecht's novel, scheduled for spring publication by Putnam. I have seen not a single line of it, but I predict that it will be the great novel of the year, if of not of several years. I have been called a fool for believing in Ben Hecht, and I am about to make a number of persons eat their words.

VINCENT STARRETT.

A man becomes disillusioned with marriage; a woman only with her husband.



## Unauthorized Authors

There's absolutely no use struggling to become a successful young author. It simply can't be done. At boarding school there used to be a quaint folk-tale in circulation of a girl who papered her room entirely with love-letters. Letters containing proposals formed the border.

Some of us suspected the situation had been lifted from *I, Mary McLane*, but, be that as it may, there are lots of people with grief like a knife in their hearts who could paper Washington Artillery Hall with rejection slips.

And do you know why? It's the advertisements.

Read them—and weep, brothers and sisters of the burning quill. What chance is there for you?

Nemesis has crept gradually on us from behind and then leaped on our necks. When they began winding up stories among the ads the authors murmured a little among themselves but let it go at that. When the advertising sections of magazines grew three times as thick as the rest, there was the first flicker of fear among the writing ranks. But the full calamity crashed upon us suddenly.

Do you think the public is going to bother chasing to a conclusion a tortured offering of fiction, chopped into mincemeat by a dozen (Continued on Page 9852)'s when it can turn to the advertising section and make its choice of adventure, philosophy, romance—aye, even poetry, all served up with

art of the utmost magnificence and finished on one page?

For instance—

At the top of a page, a Boticelli woman *drees her weird* at a casement that overlooks a dusky garden. It is an artistic thing that could be used with perfect taste to illustrate "Marianna in the Moated Grange."

"She never knew how close to happiness she came," tactfully whispers a repressed headline. And with delicate sympathy the type goes on to tell you how love's gossamer wings hovered just for a moment over that bent head, then flew away. In the last line a confidential postscript informs you why her knight rode on to Camelot. It was because she did not use Onotatall Toilet Water.

Right on the next page, if you prefer a happy ending, under a McMein painting entitled "The Kiss" that every flapper from Frisco to Maine will cut out and passepartout, a pean of joy will burble forth:

"Peggy, my dear, to think that I am here in Paris, with this precious gold ring on my finger—and Bob! And that last year I was so blue and lonely because I felt left out of everything and never had a good time.

"I suppose I should tell you of all the wonders of Paris and beautiful France, but I happened to meet Mildred Livingston on the street yesterday and she tells me you still suffer with freckles as you used to.

"My dear, you remember at school

how my freckles were really worse than yours, and I, like you, was so sensitive and never went out or enjoyed myself.

"They have been gone now, for—let me see, about ten months—yes, just that, for it was then I met Bob, you know, and he says it was my lovely complexion that first interested him in me.

"So, Peggy dear, do buy a box of Fadeout Freckle Cream and be as happy as

"Your loving Imogene."

Would you have the problem play and eternal triangle stuff? Read how the brave little mother of triplets won back her husband's wandering love, captivated the president of the firm, got the big promotion for John and broke the family triumphantly into the 400. It was a simple matter after she had taken a course by mail with the Home Dressmaking School and found how to dress up to her type on \$2 a week.

For good, solid, home and fireside reading, here is the personal story of the young shipping clerk who bought the little suburban bungalow and married Daisy five weeks after he ordered the book called *Memory Training*.

Even the youngsters are deserting the Henty Books for accounts of Wilmer Hughes of Minneapolis (insert photograph) who worked his way through high school and college and sent his mother to a health resort by selling *Ladies' Home Journals*.

So, there you are.

Personally, I am resigned to our fate, and, after taking this means of easing my humiliated soul, I shall just lay away my typewriter in lavender and become a literary nun.

DORIS KENT.

## THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE

(WITH DUE RESPECT TO H. L. M.)

One by one, the scholars come to learn the Puritan tongue.

Sit down on hard benches manufactured by right-minded people.

The right angles of the benches, sculptured self-portraits of right-angled wills...

Whose chins sway forty-odd states and who knows how many territories.

Whose jaws rule round backs straight. Backs that might have grown thoughtless from too much sitting under trees.

Once crooked, aimless trees that have themselves been hewn down and planed level.

Elms of New England, oaks of the Middle West, eucalypti of California.

Their heads prone to escape rooted grooves at the whim of a breeze or two.

One by one, professors rise to lines as rigid as pencils.

Knock down school walls, you will find all the pencils vertical parallels.

All the scholars right-angle-triangle parallels.

All the tongues, gliding out of and back into mouths, horizontal parallels.

Everybody, everything, right-angled Puritan parallels.

Acute, if there be any such, and obtuse, firmly converted.

Acute minds blunted, obtuse minds sharpened.

Lowered or raised to the balance of the ideal equal.

The right mind triumphant.

The thirteen parallel pioneer stripes, justified and multiplied.

ALFRED KREYMBORG.

# Reviews of Books

## COLLECTED POEMS OF WALTER DE LA MARE

(HOLT, 1920.)

"Three jolly gentlemen  
In coats of red,  
Rode their horses  
Up to bed.

"Three jolly gentlemen  
Snored till morn,  
Their horses champing  
The golden corn"—

So begins "The Huntsmen" in "Peacock Pie," and "The Huntsmen" and "The Horseman" and "Poor Jim Jay" and a hundred other of the nursery songs of Mr. De la Mare are such enchanting melody or whimsy that many of us are in danger of thinking of him as simply a child-balladist. It is an amiable injustice on our part, but a serious one.

It is, of course, true that if Mr. De la Mare were a writer only of the children's verse he has given us, he would be at the top of a ladder, his child-rhymes being so far superior to those of others that comparison is quite impossible. The author of "Grill me some bones, said the Cobbler," "Do diddle di do, Poor Jim Jay," "Some one came knocking at my wee small door," and "I have heard a lady this night, Lissome and jip and slim," with a picture-book imagination which leads him to such lines as

"Bakers' are warm, cobblers' dark,  
Chemists' burn watery lights,"  
and

"I saw three witches  
That bowed down like barley,"  
is without competitors.

Mr. De la Mare, however, is more than our best child-balladist. He is one of the very best poets England has ever produced. It was seven or eight years ago, when Walter De la Mare was hardly a name among the generality of readers, that Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer declared that, in his opinion, no more beautiful poem had been printed in years than the "Epitaph" in "The Listeners."

It is a poem which has been treasured by many, and Mr. De la Mare has since added to it a handful more of beautiful poems which defy criticism—songs which are not more likely to die than was "Weep ye no more, sad fountains" four hundred years ago.

The collected poems of Walter De la Mare, as they are now to be had, include "Songs of Childhood," "Peacock Pie," "Poems—1906," "The Listeners" and "Motley." It is possible that these collected poems will somewhat weary the hirsute. The mannerism which repeats the terms "sweet" and "gentle" in all connections is not consistently pleasing and is, perhaps, to poseurs in virility downright objectionable. Mr. De la Mare, too, is not very deeply concerned about liberty, equality and fraternity, nor very much—if at all—disturbed by

the current political alarms and discursions which cause such a jabbering on our own Parnassus. He writes poetry, as poetry ought to be written, for pleasure, and it is his pleasure to make quiet songs. He offers no chants royal. He does not belabour a kettle-drum. He is, in no sense of the word, a thunder-shaker.

But, at his best, Walter De la Mare uses language as few men have used it in England since Thomas Campion was a doctor, and he gives us—out of his own imagination—a pure and other-worldly beauty that is unlike anything else in our literature—a peculiarly witching beauty that is quite new. He casts over common objects a queer illumination that is half goblin-moonlight and half twilight. His cadences are, to a lover of music in words, a continual source of delight. They are new and strange, startling, completely his own. Take this from "The Listeners":

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveler,  
Knocking on the moonlit door;  
And his horse in the silence champed the

grasses

Of the forest's ferny floor:  
And a bird flew up out of the turret,  
Above the Traveler's head:  
And he smote upon the door again a second time;

'Is there anybody there?' he said."

Or this, from "Alexander":

"Voices of sea-maids singing  
Wandered across the deep:  
The sailors labouring on their oars  
Rowed, as in sleep."

The atmosphere of dream and mystery and beauty with which Walter De la Mare suffuses everything he cares to touch, by means of this complete mastery of cadence and his remarkable

aptitude for elfin imagery and epithet, is a contribution to the moods of literature. Look at these stanzas from "Martha:—"

"'Once... once upon a time...'

Over and over again,  
Martha would tell us her stories,  
In the hazel glen.

"Hers were those clear grey eyes  
You watch, and the story seems  
Told by their beautifulness  
Tranquil as dreams..."

"Her voice and her narrow chin,  
Her grave small lovely head,  
Seemed half the meaning  
Of the words she said.

"'Once... once upon a time...'  
Like a dream you dream in the night,  
Fairies and gnomes stole out.  
In the leaf-green light."

Or this, from "The Song of the Mad Prince":

"Who said, 'Ay, mum's the word';  
Sexton to willow:  
Who said, 'Greek dusk for dreams,  
Moss for a pillow'?  
Who said, 'All Time's delight  
Hath she for narrow bed;  
Life's troubled bubble broken'?—  
That's what I said."

One could quote for a long while from Walter De la Mare—culling, at that, but a few of the lines and stanzas and phrases, alive with beauty or mystery, which are scattered richly throughout his work. But neither space nor good taste will allow one to pilfer at will.

I have no particular contention to make. I admit that there are many men now writing in more astounding terms than Walter de la Mare—men



producing a greater volume of verse—men selecting more grandiose themes—better democrats—lustier ballyhoos—men with more hair on their rhymes. There are men with louder voices, but I believe there are none—not even excepting Yeats and Massfield—whose voice will carry farther, for Walter De la Mare has already produced a sufficient number of beautiful poems and songs to entitle him safely to that relative immortality which is sometimes conferred by the arts.

The author of "The Listeners," "An Epitaph," "Moonlight," "Napoleon," "Ages and Ages Ago"—strangely omitted from his collected poems—"The Song of the Secret," "The Song of the Mad Prince" and "The Song of Shad-ows," will be a long time dying.

J. M.

## WILL A CATHER'S YOUTH AND THE BRIGHT MEDUSA

(ALFRED A. KNOPF, 1920.)

TO one who has the inner understanding of that humor and sadness which go to make up life, style in literature becomes less a matter of outward grace, than of inward beauty. A conception of truth molds a form. The Greek vase-makers did not always get their sides to balance, but when this was done mechanically, it ceased to be art. In the recent volume of short stories, "Youth and the Bright Medusa," by Willa Cather, truth has been attained with simplicity. The balance matters not so much to her as the thing she wishes to express and there is carried, even to the common-place appreciation, the freshness of feeling,

the poignant realization of a new unsullied power.

Usually one feels the boundaries of a short story, partially concealed. Dots do quite a bit to create space and the snappy ending cuts contemplation short. But in this delighting volume, there are no tricks of trade, nor concession to any sort of dear Reader. Life flows beneath the eye, unhurried in telling, with every closeness of detail and vision of perspective. Atmosphere is captured with a living breath and color. One is scarcely surprised that her slender output—very slender as compared to our foremost and most joyous magazine contributors—is this result of a year or so to a book. Mr. Mencken rightly finds this the most encouraging hope for American letters in general.

Perhaps, in its larger truth, "Coming, Aphrodite!" seems the finest story of the group. It is that of two people, each with an art. The woman wins success with her hard ideal of it. Her very desires are utilized to an end—and in the end, so lightly touched upon, her name blazons in electric lights. The man wins by being, as you would say—original. He advances with his art. He works always for truth, to make the way. He is heard of later, a word now and then, as a prophet for the young. And between the epoch of Washington Square studio and their divergent goals, these two have their moment of "the perfume and passion of youth." The marvel is how into the calyx of this episode, is drawn all the truth of these two alien factors in art; the one who understands his own soul and the other who has none to question.

Willa Cather's humor is that comprehensive one of a great heart. And after all, is it not great-heartedness

that makes genius? "The Diamond Mine" and "The Sculptor's Funeral" are written with a perception that contents itself to find the irony of facts sufficiently droll. Both strike the note of the tragic humor in the Every Day. In "The Diamond Mine," the family "genius" is fed upon by family parasites. They are the burden of courage and an art so driven to meet their demands, as to miss its own greatness. Cressida's family have "the Garnet Look," which "though based upon a strong family resemblance, was nothing more than the restless preoccupied expression of an inflamed sense of importance." Her very loves feed upon her profits to the hour of a death laid at the door of advertising.— Oh, my countrymen, what abstract truths in personal history!

"A Gold Slipper" is a delicious fling. Kitty Ayshire impales the tribe of Wingless Mind, they "who go deep, but never go high." "You don't give me any good reasons," she tells McKann. "Your morality seems to me the compromise of cowardice, apologetic and sneaking. When righteousness becomes alive, you hate it as much as you do beauty. You want a little of each in your life, perhaps, adulterated, sterilized with the sting taken out"... "McKann hated tall talk."

There is a mission in all this, if the word is not too deadly. From her first writings Willa Cather has shown her belief that writing must be awakening as well as entertainment. Brief form is to her all the surer urge for conveying vision. "Paul's Case," one of her earliest stories, shows this very clearly. The tragic demand of a boy's nature through damnable surroundings, is traced with merciful analysis. Such demands—and who shall plumb their

cravings?—bring Youth to Death. In "A Wagner Matinee"—and this the sulphuric reader will relish as a Scriabine prelude—the same living idealism is at work to arouse the faint or mislead spirit—"It never really died then, the soul which can suffer so excruciatingly and so interminably; it withers to the outward eye only, like that strange moss which can lie on a dusty shelf half a century and yet, if placed in water, grows green again."

Such a lyric touch as this rouses the "tears of divine despair." Here is a clearer ideal for the short story. Only a writer will know what lucid concentration that ideal demands.

To pass on the inner understanding that upholds the arts and does not overlook the gentleman in the lavender striped shirt sleeves (with the ladies' permission)—is indeed achievement in literature. To some "Youth and the Bright Medusa" will be a thorn in the side of a righteous man, even as Kitty Ayshire's slipper, but to others who know the heights and depths of life, a treasure akin to that which must be fed on in the heart with thankfulness.

F. F.

## PAUL ELDRIDGE—VANITAS

(THE STRATFORD CO., 1920.)

**V**ANITAS," the volume of poems by Paul Eldridge issued in the summer of this year by the Stratford Company, introduces a poet who, for his queer and often powerful faculty of imagery, is worthy of wide and honorable recognition, but who, from his general pessimism, style of expression, and obsession with ideas rather than emotions, precision rather

than popular appeal, is but too likely to have difficulty in reaching an audience. It is not probable that the American democracy will devour several printings of "Vanitas." And yet the man who can pen such lines as these,

"My thoughts are timorous mice  
Gnawing at Illusions,  
Afraid of Truth,  
The grey-eyed Cat."

and these

"The Moon,  
The painted mountebank  
Of the infinite circus,  
Grins and bows  
To his celestial audience.

"The Ocean,  
A clumsy bear,  
Sways and dances  
To the bagpipes  
Of the merry winds."

—the man who can pen such lines as those deserves applause and congratulation. That queer adeptness at imagery is rare.

I am not attempting to say that "Vanitas" is a great book. When a great book of poetry appears in America the gates will lift up their heads and sing. One of these days the collected poems of Edwin Arlington Robinson or David Morton may turn the trick, but the day is not yet. One of these days Paul Eldridge himself may turn the trick, but he has not done it here.

"Vanitas" is an exhilarating personal expression of a sincere and conscientious artist in language. It is a book with much strength and beauty in it—not consistent strength and not consistent beauty, but much of both. It reveals a man—a devil of a pessimist, but an excellent artist—with a busy and

fertile brain, a clever hand, a lively fancy, and an ideal of beauty. He has seen things, here and there, that nobody in the world but himself could have seen, and told them to us in precise and beautiful language. He has a queer intellectual eye for images that makes him a very isolated member of the American Parnassus. There is a queer beauty and a queer strength about his best conceptions that make him lonely. And it is the queer beauty or originality of his images which makes his work exhilarating to the reader of general contemporary verse.

Paul Eldridge writes almost exclusively in free rhythms and without rhyme. The absence of melodic effects forces him to rely, for success, upon the strength of his conceptions, for, as is the case with all writers of *vers libre*, it is quite seldom he attains rare beauty of sound, which in *vers libre* is the most difficult thing in the world. But his imagery carries him high.

"Vanitas" is a volume of pessimism. There is much irony and a certain amount of pity in Paul Eldridge's portrayal of himself and the world. But, pitiful or ironical, he is always pessimistic. He is obsessed with death and decay and the "transitoriness of these vain things under the moon." He has not much admiration or encouragement for—as he calls him in one place—"Man, the Cock of the World." He sees no particular hope ahead for either the Cock or the World. But he is quite full of lively and pleasurable fancies and hardly as soul-sick as one might expect, for so ardent a nihilist. With Anatole France, he calls upon Irony and Pity as the appropriate witnesses and judges of mankind. And he amuses himself with fancies and embroideries

upon the theme of the world, though—  
or because—there is a doom upon it.

I quote "The Black Cat," a queer and  
surprising conception:

"The Mice,  
The Inhabitants of the Earth,  
The cosmic Cellar,  
Are gnawing clamorously,  
And disturb  
The sleeping of the Stars—  
The Ancient Guardian  
Swings his lantern—The Moon—  
As he descends  
The mouldy steps  
Of Infinity,—  
While the Black Cat  
Under his arm  
Meaws—meaws—"

There is a sardonic fable for you,  
matched by nothing in recent litera-  
ture. It is queer. But it is immense.

And here is a small bit of irony that  
is quite pleasing:

#### THE LAKELET MEDITATES.

"I am the eternal Heavens,  
And the stars and the sun lie upon me  
More softly than the sudden dipping  
Of a swallow's wing—  
And above, in Infinite Space,  
An azure toy-mirror  
Reflects me forever..."

And here is a piece of ghoulery that is  
quite diabolical, but strong enough to  
abide and stand in spite of a thousand  
fore-runners in the same eternal theme  
which cannot make it trite:

#### ILLUSION

"Life was a weary trudging  
Through sticky mud—  
I yearned for Death,  
The golden wind,  
The ceaseless merger of things—  
I thought I'd join the cosmos  
In her rapturous career,  
Dance cotillions with the stars,  
Kiss the red lips of moons,  
Scatter voluptuous perfumes  
From a rose's chalice..."

"Are the cracks in this mouldy wood  
The dancing stars?  
Are these scarlet worms  
Crawling, heavily,  
Like pregnant things  
Upon my teeth,  
The lips of moons?  
Is my coffin the cosmos,  
In her rapturous career?  
Is there a cosmos?"

"Death is as futile as Life!"

Paul Eldridge is certainly a pessi-  
mist. Two-thirds of the poems in  
"Vanitas" are in very much this same  
strain. It is the pessimism commonly  
encountered in youth. But it is not,  
with Paul Eldridge, the pessimism of  
poetic youth, mourning its mortality.  
It is a set and established philosophy.  
He is quite sure that the world is vain,  
and that life is vain, and I believe he  
feels that it matters somewhat that they  
are vain. Pessimism, however, is as good  
a field for the artist to grow his cab-  
bages in, as optimism. Paul Eldridge  
has produced, out of negation and nihi-  
lism, some startling and handsome  
poems. We should thank him for them.

And if Art is Play, as is so often



maintained, Paul Eldridge is also an artist in playfulness as well as in philosophical diablerie. Perhaps it is in his playful embroidering of fanciful themes that he will do his best work in the future. Some of the best work in "Vanitas" is playful stuff. "The Moon and the Ocean" is playful. And it is when he begins to fabricate images that he shows what a strange and original mind he has. He is different from anyone else in America certainly, though he may have cousins in France.

In "Opinion: *What Are the Stars?*" the Wolf says:

"The stars are shepherds' eyes  
Watching over flocks—  
But our feet  
Fall more softly  
Than shadows of lambs."

In "My Hopes" he writes:

"My hopes are gay-painted moths,  
Voluptuous clowns,  
Fluttering to delirious music—  
But the red-eyed flame  
Whistles and laughs—  
Whistles and laughs..."

In "My thoughts" he writes:

"My thoughts are tremulous echoes  
Of far-off drums  
The stars are beating on  
With silver rays."

And Paul Eldridge can write a giddy and rapturous line with the best of them:

"Life sings like a drunken bird,  
But I sit at the window and dream—"

and, in "The Singer":

"She sings to us  
Of lads and lassies kissing,

Of flowers, trees, and eternal pledges,  
Of sun, and stars, and the roguish moons."

I am not trying to tell anyone that Paul Eldridge has proved himself a great poet, or that he has produced in "Vanitas" a great book. I believe, however, that America has now in Paul Eldridge a genius as queer and original and as portentous for beauty and charm, as was promised to us a quarter of a century ago in "The Black Riders." That is a great deal to say for any man, but I trust it is not too much.

K. N.

## THE IMPERIAL ORGY

(BONI & LIVERIGHT, 1920.)

Some day some savant is going to compile—as final and conclusive proof of man's superiority to the monkeys—a work on the Ingenuities of Human Cruelty. It is a neglected branch of the literature of homo-worship. I believe nobody has yet seriously attempted it. Perhaps because of the immensity of the undertaking. A mere catalogue of the devices of cruelty invented by the little brother of the angels (with no description of their effect) would cover a parchment longer than the wall of China. Some day, however, some savant will attempt it. When he does he will find a great mass of data in Mr. Saltus' "Imperial Orgy."

In sketching the history of the tsars "from first to last," Mr. Saltus has, with as consistent an eye to theatrical effect as a Sunday-feature writer, made the most of cruelty and the devices of cruelty. You can hardly open the volume at random without finding a new one. Largely this is the fault of the

tsars, who did carry refinements in cruelty almost as far as the Chinese. But it is party Mr. Saltus'. One feels that he has overworked the dramatic appeal of horror. One grows to feel that he needs to rely, for power, on his subject matter—"Others, tied in sacks were trampled by maddened horses"—instead of on his pen. There is, throughout the book, a strained and wearisome struggle for the theatrical and the dramatic, which is thoroughly irritating.

Taking supreme instances of cruelty, of horror, of pomp, of lust, in a quickly moving pageant (a pageant, really, at a gallop) from the first tsar to the last, Mr. Saltus attempts to couple consistently the supreme in subject-matter with the supreme in expression. He endeavors to get into every word, every phrase, the maximum impact. He attempts to bludgeon you to your knees

with an ultimate word, an ultimate phrase, in every sentence. Since Mr. Saltus is, after all, not in this book a "lord of language," he fails. In general, he merely irritates with his countless dramatic gestures and attitudes. His book is a "penny-dreadful"—a "Sunday-supplement" to history. And his style—nervous, insistent, staccato—is consistently annoying. He screams loud enough, but his voice cracks; yet from the first page to the last he never lowers his voice. He accordingly deafens and grates when he would astound.

"The Imperial Orgy" is full of curious and fascinating gossip—it sketches, sometimes powerfully, but more often falsely and theatrically, much that is horrible and much that is gorgeous. If Mr. Saltus would not shout in one's ear, one would enjoy it: because of its subject matter, it is interesting.

X.

## THE PROFESSIONS

**LAW:** Justice—bound in calf.

**MEDICINE:** A ballyhoo man in a Mortuary Chapel.

**JOURNALISM:** Michelangelo painting a house.

**MINISTRY:** The Song of Songs on a Victrola—God holding office hours.

**THE ARMY:** Little girls "playing ladies"—Octogenarians spinning tops.

**POLITICS:** Socrates playing the stock market—Simon Legree joshing the slaves.

## INHIBITION

O farther than the farthest Pleiades,  
Than fabled death in youth's long dream of life,  
Your nearness is a slow and torturing knife,  
Ribbioned with secret smiles and ecstasies.  
Yours not the fault, when you are only you,  
Child-like, and mute of malice; mine the blame—  
Yet am I what I am, and take no shame  
Loving where, cowardly, I dare not woo.  
And for my dream, I pay the price of dreams,  
Torment and doubt, and questionings, and fear...  
Let me, I pray you then, continue near,  
Kissed by the shadow, where the glory streams.  
There is so much forbidden, Dear—and yet  
One may still dream, and one may not forget.

EDGAR SAVAGE.

## THE BUTTERFLIES

In a town in the West when a certain lady came to be on her deathbed, the chamber was assailed by butterflies. They swarmed in hundreds, through the windows and about the bed. When the windows were closed, they fluttered in clouds against the panes, shutting out the sun.

Man—from different angles: Women fodder; fetuses gone to seed; the larvae of angels; bob-tailed apes.

A new punishment for Tantalus—near beer.

Experienced women are like old shoes.

## Comment

Dumbarton Grange,  
Dumbarton, Va.

Indeed I think you have made a most interesting beginning with *THE DOUBLE DEALER*, and I shall look forward to the future numbers.

As for "frank criticism," I am too deeply and pleasurably prejudiced—being human—by the things said about me in that first number to be an unbiased judge. I, very naturally, liked the whole thing, and send my compliments to The Editors.

JAMES BRANCH CABELL.

New York City.

Allow me to congratulate you on the first number of *THE DOUBLE DEALER*. Hope it springs a New South on us. Can't you stop our Dear Country from going to hell?

California and New York were the last of the Old Guard of Liberty. Enter New Orleans and *THE DOUBLE DEALER*!

BENJAMIN DE CASSERES.

New Orleans, La.

Your initial bow is quite clever, a miniature Smart Set, as it were, whose gifted editor you so justly extol in a number of places.

I agree with your friends, however, that a magazine name which requires such a lengthy and involved explanation as you have chosen, is somewhat awkward.

The material you have chosen for your first issue is up to snuff. Especially meritorious is the Chicago Corre-

spondent's letter. It is to be hoped that we will hear more from him, as he is palpably a Mencknite, and, therefore, clever.

The general typography is good, but by all means *get rid* promptly of that hand-lettered, sophomoric title device on the cover. It reminds the initiated of that famous local periodical, *Old Gold and Purple*. The latter remark is the only destructive criticism I have to offer, and I wish you success and prosperity.

WILLIAM H. SCHULTZ.

New Orleans, La.

Congratulations!

I was a scoffer, but am repentant.

Vol. 1, No. 1, has both brains and art. It is easy to look through, and certainly easy to look at. How an aggregation of amateurs (pardon) could engineer a thing as good is the Eighth Wonder, the sub-wonder being that the contributions of the home talent go better than the high-priced imported stuff.

I like your editorials, your book reviews and your longest poem, in which the Poet of the Quartier gets all the color of the *libre* stuff without working nearly as hard as the Amy Lowell Legion.

Now that Opus 1 has (with some restraint visible between the lines) quite safely and properly established you as a legitimate institution, your friends would like to see you break loose and throw a little red stuff in the eyes of us. You can be devilish without being dirty.

A SUBSCRIBER.



## Poeme Pythagoricienne

There is snow five inches deep carpeting the roadway and the world. And people pass, coming and going upon the crunching snow, while I watch them out of the window. Like ghosts, they pass and re-pass in the wintry air. I puff an old pipe. After all, they are but symbols—like clouds and trees, parabolas and triangles.

I puff an old pipe and smile.

And somehow out of the fumes of my pipe, like reality itself, steals the ghost of an old sorrow. If I were not soberly wise, I should be broken under this sorrow. If I were not soberly wise, it would destroy me surely.

But I puff an old pipe and smile. After all, it is only a symbol—like a teapot or a quadratic equation, a door-knob or a triangle.

BURTON HARCOURT.

## Caprice

Presently, when I am very dead,  
And this, my body, rotted quite away,  
A whimsy ghost will come to you and say  
The many things in life I might have said  
Of this and this and that, alack-a-day—

The tender, daring things I could not say,  
What time my flesh and bones were habited,  
This wanton sprite spun out upon your bed  
Will whisper you, alas, alack-a-day—  
Presently, when I am very dead.

SCARAMOUCH.

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# THE DOUBLE DEALER

MARCH, 1921

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## AND MARGINALIA

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## THE MAGAZINE IN AMERICA

**I**S there in the United States today a magazine which is seriously attempting to publish, not this or that material which is demanded by popular taste or which is predetermined by a policy, but simply that material of whatever sort which is, in the opinion of the editors, literature of essential value? There are perhaps two: *The Dial* (and even *The Dial* seems only too likely to print many a thing, not because it is inherently excellent, but because it is new) and *The Yale Review* (which is quite as likely, on the other hand, to print many a thing because it is conservatively scholarly, rather than because it is beautiful). Omitting these, we have not a magazine at all.

It is idle to refer to *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Hearst's Cosmopolitan*, and their like, or to the Munsey and Street and Smith publications, and the cheap sex magazines of New York and Chicago. The artistic degradation of the latter group is almost incredible. They are characterized by a studied abhorrence of real literature. If the periodicals of the former group, by any chance publish a bit of good stuff, it is not intentional. The editors themselves are first to admit that their purpose is not now, and never has been, to accept for publication either prose or verse of essential value, but material of such

a widely popular appeal that the number of readers will multiply to millions.

*The Nation? The New Republic? The Review? The Freeman? The Liberator?* These are political journals.

*The North American Review?* Also a political journal.

*The Atlantic Monthly?* A periodical for professors and librarians, sad, depressing, and generally futile; an almost consistently sterile magazine that can afford but little pleasure or profit to a person of any intellectual or artistic vitality.

*Century? Harper's? Scribner's?* Respectable middle class magazines. Sad, depressing. They contain an occasional excellent thing, but it is used, not primarily because of its excellence, but because it offers an intrinsic appeal to the magazine's public. (However excellent, if it might disgruntle many or any readers, it would be refused).

*Vanity Fair?* It will print nothing which is not clever.

*Smart Set?* This is perhaps the most valuable periodical in America, but it is after all merely the mouthpiece of the country's two most brilliant critics. It will (under certain limitations) print anything good. But two-thirds of its space is given over to the cheapest of sex matter.

*Touchstone?* An art journal.

*The Little Review?* A courageous pamphlet, but championing a particular



and perhaps decadent movement—all eyes for a “snot-green sea”. It will put forward nearly anything of merit that is not conservative. But it is, after all, blind of one eye.

*The Pagan?* A magazine generally gallant enough in the cause of literature and art, but which has shown too often a weakness for the new or the different, regardless of merit.

*The Dial*, *The Yale Review*, *The Little Review* and *The Pagan* comprise the list of our high-intentioned periodicals of catholic scope. (We are well provided with magazines of verse, and a new one, *The Measure*, is announced). *The Little Review*, as we have remarked, is hot on one scent only. *The Pagan* has been “villagy.” Our only catholic literary magazines, in the broad cultural sense of the word, are *The Dial* and *The Yale Review*. Even these are to a certain extent (the latter, to a great extent) restricted by policy.

Good literature, to be sure, is often or occasionally given to us in many of the others and in many we have not mentioned. But the primary purpose of all of them—except *The Smart Set* in its non-popular portion—is not towards good literature. It is toward material of a definite or indefinite class-appeal. They are attempting to acquire or to maintain a circulation among certain classes of readers in the American democracy. In most cases “their method is flattery and their purpose profit.” Any number of excellent productions in prose or verse may be denied a place in any one of them on some technicality—or on some point of policy; because it is too abstruse for

some readers; because of an “unhappy ending;” because it embodies a heresy; because it embodies a platitude; because it is written in rhyme; because it is not written in rhyme; because it is conventional; because it is not conventional. *These magazines can find any number of excuses for refusing a good thing and any number of excellent reasons (moral or financial) for accepting a bad one.*

If *The Double Dealer* misses an opportunity to print a bit of real literature submitted to it, it will be for no cause other than its editors’ stupidity or their healthy fear of the law.

*The Double Dealer* is entering upon its career with no policy whatever but that of printing the very best material it can procure, regardless of popular appeal, moral or immoral stigmata, conventional or unconventional technique, new theme or old. If we fail to fill our pages with excellent literature, it will be from one of two causes—either because we are incapable of recognizing good stuff when we see it, or because good stuff has not been furnished us. But, God giving us an eye for it, we shall present you with the very best we can find. Naturally, our corps of contributors, if they are to be valuable, must be recruited slowly. Meanwhile, out of a certain natural bent, we prefer to fill the blank pages between excellent matter with “light stuff.” The intentionally light, even when but partially successful, is more palatable fare, we believe, than the unsuccessfully heavy. A skit, a jest, a jingle, making no pretense to the name of literature, is—we are firmly convinced—a more honorable display of ink than a literary failure.

## JAMES GIBBONS HUNEKER

JAMES Gibbons Huneker is dead. That fascinating playboy of the arts who kept nine muses guessing has checked out of this "garish un-restful hotel."

I wonder how many men and women of this country realize the loss of the critic who championed Ibsen when Ibsen was synonymous with prurience; who, in the hysteria of Wagner's popularity, pointed *Tristan and Isolde* as the only valid work of Wagnerian art; who blew up the Shavian philosophy myth, blown bladder against blown bladder; who gave us a peep at William James, the apologist for opportunism, and Henri Bergson, the peripatetic lyricist.

Cosmopolitan is a bad word; I choose to think of James Huneker rather as explorer of the continental and English arts and letters who would return to the United States and exhibit, in his many absorbing volumes, the curious flora and fauna to the puzzled and delighted natives. American, except by birth, he hardly was, and perhaps more Viennese than Parisian in sympathy. In the air of that one-time dream city he breathed, a natural child, during those carefree, remote, ante-bellum years.

James Huneker would never admit the war. Untouched by the current swash and tosh he, nevertheless, underestimated the bleak ruin that followed. He did not anticipate the slamming of the gate on that era of laughter and free intelligence, while hunger and death and mob rule, flaunting red banners crying the terrible word "Liberty," hold sway.

And so James Huneker goes, curiously, at the very moment when his own

city, Vienna, is begging alms at America's door, for her starving children. His books and his influence live on. But without him this man-ridden world is surely not a more cheerful place.



## THE EPHEMERAL SEX

As a creative artist woman is a complete failure, a nonentity. A sweeping statement but, none the less, a true one. Cull from the illustrious dead, the inspired poets, painters, musicians, sculptors and fictioneers of the past, and find us a woman to whom the term "genius" can be applied. We know very well, dear girls, that you will take issue with us instantan, and cite several of your sex who have proven, in your sweet minds, an exception to the rule.

You will, perhaps, uphold a certain Mrs. Browning, and one Sappho in the ranks of poesy; the two Georges, Sand and Eliot, plus Miss Austen, of "Pride and Prejudice" fame, in that of fiction; Rosa Bonheur, the "dog and pony" painter, you will protest was a mistress of the brush; in sculpture, we don't know just whom you will champion, though we have read somewhere of a young lady in England successfully doing the clay; in the realm of music, the composers of course, we believe we have you positively stumped.

And yet, time was, and is for that matter, when the business of being musician, painter and, most especially poet, was considered quite unmanly, decidedly effeminate. What would this sleepy old world now amount to if this opinion had been taken seriously by those spirited jockeys of Pegasus,

those soldiers of the Ideal, and shamed them into the "manlier" professions of, say, linen-draping, pill-dispensing, prize-fighting, or Shylocking? This momentous question might well be answered by Miss B. Fairfax and her following.

But let us be liberal, or at least tolerant, and consider your case. We can name you a hundred poets all male, any of whom posterity will acclaim, when your Mrs. Browning will be dimly recalled only as the talented wife of Robert Browning. And Sappho? A tenuous myth, a charming legend, an exquisite anthology of love songs, but not a woman. Rosa Bonheur? A facile iconographer, no more—the male instinct projecting itself on her canvases—man in feminine guise. The same obtains for George Sand and Mrs. Evans. They were more man than woman. So-called women-artists, what are they, for the most part? Fripperied males, some of them minus even the fripperies.

Find us a female Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Bach, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Phidias, Rodin, Cervantes, Dean Swift, etc., etc., (space being shy) and, forthwith, we recant and apologize. It is respectfully submitted that, before you attempt to produce your politicians, you first produce your poets and painters, the leisure being yours, the pleasure ours, the profit posterity's. More power to you.

We have, dear girls, no contention to make with your sex. As a sex you are a delight and a necessity. As mothers, wives and mistresses, you are beyond compare, but, as creative artists, we reaffirm, complete failures, pathetic nonentities.

## MOTES AND EYES

Of current faiths the hardest for me to take seriously is spiritualism. With Bernard Shaw I could never imagine a man wearing No. 12 shoes seated in heaven. "That undiscovered country from whose bourne almost everybody is returning," as Mr. De Casseres has it, seems to have lost all its awfulness and mystery and gained a host of table rapping, tambourine shaking spooks—an illimitable empyrean of trap drummers . . . a vaudeville show the acts of which continue unto eternity.

Departing from the time my twelve-year-old fingers besmeared my Mother's Doré Bible counting the angels, the while wondering how all these seraphs could be squeezed into one Paradise, literal mindedness has shocked me. Yet to these very respectable ghouls, the spiritualists, there appears nothing grotesque in the conception of the invisible, unembodied, almost ubiquitous creatures, who worry with such ineffectual modes of communication to their dear ones as straining to tip a table or scrawling disgracefully over a slate.

But there is more than a snicker in all this. "There is tears." Tears, that with our tender minds we cannot gaze down into the dark abyss. We find as Nietzsche found that the dark abyss gazes down into us. Cowards we are born and we live by coward fare, by pretty lies.

You who find spiritualism a joke do you chuckle when your own blind spot is derided? And I who scoff at you both, once missed a train, as scuttling along, my eyes lit on a scattering of effulgent pins, and stopped to pick them



one by one from the dirt to propitiate the crooked minded furies. Doubtless some spiritualist had overlooked them.



### A DARK AGE?

The Dark Ages were the centuries that followed the downfall of the Roman sovereignty in Europe, the smashing up of the thousand-year-old Latin culture and its hierarchies of power. The Goths, the Vandals, and the outland Huns, whose names have now become by-words for Cruelty, Destruction and Terror, were upstart people whose governments resembled closely what would now be called Democracy. In reality, they were hordes of demagogue-driven, boss-bullied men and women; their leaders, with virile exceptions, like Alaric of the Ostro-Goths, ordinary tyrants indistinguishable from Tammany bosses, or Russian Commisars of the Proletariat.

The world was dark. Fitful dynasties arose and fell with bloodshed and torture. Men and women led furtive, feral lives. In this mad terror-ridden time it was impossible that art or culture or even decency should survive. "Where is security, there is light," and there was no safe place on the world's ridge save in the cloister.

Out of this chaos, after hundreds of years, arose the feudal system, aided by the Roman Church. An aristocratic hierarchy. Equilibrium was established. The flowering of this period was The Renaissance.

The world is now undergoing a second barbarian invasion. Like the first,

it is extended over a period of several centuries. Beginning in the eighteenth, with the French revolution, checked in the nineteenth, it has received a tremendous impetus from the August, 1914, cataclysm. Being in the midst of it we can no more accurately foresee its results than could a scholar or senator of Rome, at the first sack of the city by the Goths have foretold the intellectual depredation of Europe that was to follow. But this invasion, like the other, is a tremendous and irresistible kink in the "world line," one which has about it the "majesty of doom."

The Russian revolution with its apotheosis of the laborer, is directly comparable to the democratic theory of the equality of man. One is a more advanced and violent step; but both work towards the same horrible denouement, the seizure of the power and the glory by the savage, the shameless and the ignorant, who have always outnumbered, and will always outnumber, the intelligent and humane. We see no difference between them, either in their theory of equality, or in their reality of mob-mastery; between the consolidation of power into the hands of monopoly, and communist leaders who rail against these monopolists.

From such a barbarian invasion the one result can but be another dark age, an age of shadow, an age of bloodshed and torture, with men clinging to their rat-like lives in trepidation. If the altars of culture can be barricaded against a capricious and unrestrained mob, it will be a new thing under the sun. No civilization has yet been able to survive the trampling of those terrible hooves.



## THE MOVIES

Whilst the newspapers scream with sadistic glee of this or that, "menace," of the Soviet bomb throwers, of invasion of the Japanese, we sorry sheep join in and take up the cry. We forget the menace of our own making, which grows fat in the heart of Broadway and thrives as well on Main street, Kankakee?—THE MOVIES.

We are not fanatics. With the inventor of the celluloid drama we have no quarrel—but with the herd at large who swallow blandly the mush and slime of all the canny producers of the thing.

Would you have your little man bud from adolescence with the belief that great fortunes are invariably made by frenzied bounders who pull day long at a ticker tape and sail through golden nights in the arms of other men's wives?

Would you wish your pink-cheeked darling with the dimpled knees to imagine that she, a potential debutante, will be captivated by the ambassador from the Argentine, and will live later a life of intrigue and duplicity in the gayest capitals of the continent, when she could have married Jim, who worked his way up to vice-president and a modest little home with chintz curtains?

Would you have these little minds, eager and imaginative, conclude that cocktails flow unceasingly in all the larger restaurants, that the waiters therein are ever affable and appreciative of gratuities, that stern judges grant pardons at the drop of a gray-haired mother's tear, or that the marines are on hand the world over to deliver us from out the villain's clutches, and all the rest?

You would not. So why shrug shoulders at the menace? As for the formulae you are instilling into the youthful brain cells to the contrary, they can be of no avail. It is patent that the teachings of such stupendous creatures as vampires and pie-hurlers will far outweigh in importance the principles of a mere parent. If your progeny turn adventures or satyr there is small wonder. You have sanctioned these scenic atrocities on life—you have even believed them.

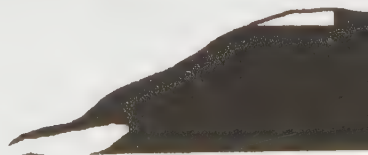


## THE LOLLYPOPULACE

IT was a saying of Bion, the ancient Bucolic minstrel, that it is impossible to please the multitude except by becoming a sweetmeat or a cheap wine. But this was before the day of the Yellow Press and the Silent Drama. Nowadays all that seems necessary to please Multitude is to divorce your wife, shoot your mother-in-law, rob a bank or run for president. The Press and the movies do the rest.

If you prefer a simpler and, sometimes, safer procedure, and you are or are not ill-favored, join a cinema circus and get in the ring with Fairbanks, Pickford, Talmadge *et cie*. This claps you in the "sweetmeat" class, at once.

Better, perhaps, stick to your publicity through the "legitimate." If needs be, and you have the "coin," take on a press agent to cajole the boys behind the guns into believing you the "guy" or the "goil" of the hour. Have your photograph made in the divers romantic attitudes of inspiration, perspiration and prophylaxis. Mary Garden, in a



one-piece bathing suit emerging from the surf at Narragansett Pier. Olga Petrova snapped "pen in hand" on the point of perpetrating a "pome" for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. Jack Dempsey cavorting with the little ones at the Coronado Beach Orphanage. Gamaliel Harding in the act of landing a whale off the Florida coast.

Why is it that all presidents, elect and elected, must be flaunted before our humble eyes as big-game hunters, modern Ik Waltons, potential Chick Evanses? It's certainly a "helluva" compliment to American intelligence. Bion was right, after all, "it is impossible to please the multitude except by becoming a sweetmeat or a cheap wine."

## The Accident

The Omnipotent was showing off the earth to one of his friends.

"Observe," he said, "the singular beauty of that ocean! See how its colors blend as the waves surge through them! I flatter myself that I did rather a good day's work in creating that."

"Very fine indeed," replied his friend.

"And over there, on the eastern side, the stern loveliness of that mountain! That touch of snow on the summit sets off so strikingly the rolling green of the lower slopes. Not bad at all as an artistic endeavor, now is it?"

"Most commendable," agreed his friend.

"And look closely," he went on, "at the remarkable grace of some of these birds and animals. Don't you admire the easy sweep of that sea-gull's wing, and the rippling glide of the tiger?"

"That reminds me," said his friend "What is that strange creature which seems everywhere to be infesting your world? It is not beautiful to look at; it seems to have set up shells or nests that are certainly hideous; and from the horrible groans and cries it emits I gather it is not happy. Fortunately, it seems to be engaged principally in mutual extermination; but what under the sun is it?"

The Omnipotent blushed slightly and cleared his throat.

"To tell the truth," he murmured, "I rather hoped you'd overlook that. That is a little experiment I made one day that I am sorry to say turned out quite badly. I have tried several times to destroy it, but so far I have discovered no real cure for the pest.

"It is called Man."

M. A. DE FORD.

## A Request

When I am out of fashion  
Like hats that once they wore,  
Or some long-opened ration,  
And no one reads me more,  
Then give me some compassion  
Who loved my books before.

When new young men write verses  
That I don't understand,  
And thick gray mist immerses  
My mind-seen glittering land  
And only weary hearses  
Travel its golden sand,

Say to that *jeunesse dorée*,  
Though it be trite to say,  
That I too found a glory  
Far eastward of Cathay  
And wrote a golden story  
That's had its golden day.

LORD DUNSANY.



## The Rider Through Relativity

MY death warrant," said Aurel Sharrington. He stared at the sheet in his hand, glaring white in the electric light that showered from his table lamp. The familiar writing of his old friend Dr. Hameroy, swam and swelled before his eyes. The long angular characters began to resemble, as he thought, lines of dancing skeletons, grotesquely interlocked.

"I have made my final and decisive laboratory test," ran a passage in the letter. "If I did not know that you would damn me for hiding the truth, I would lie and say: there is hope. But your parents named you Aurelius, and I believe you have managed to prove that they did not misname you."

"Dear Mark," murmured Sharrington, with a smile, "the compliment is forced, but he felt obliged to sugar-coat *that* pill."

He let the letter drop on the desk, and reached for a sheet of paper. The pen thudded into the great crystal inkstand, then whispered over the coarse, hand-made paper:

My Dear Eve: You are free—for I'm going to be free. There's no hope for me, I hear—so there is hope for you. Forgive the drama at the tail-end of my destiny—and be happy with whomever you may fee is necessary. . . .

"How banal!" he muttered, tore the sheets into bits, seized another and wrote:

My Dearest Eve . . .

"That will do," said he, "so far as steel and ink are concerned. She will

understand, as an intelligent wife should. The rest—"

He opened a drawer in the desk—a small flat object shone with a dull blue-black lustre—he laid it upon the edge of the desk—a small automatic pistol.

"— the rest is steel and fire."

Odd, he thought, that one should be playful, almost witty—considering the occasion. A hangman's humor—or philosophy. The one thing that might reconcile one to remain is that one is constantly making new discoveries—those impressive death-bed sayings preserved so piously may be true after all—the last flare of the expiring match.

Aurel Sharrington had come to a snarl in the threads of his existence. And he was for a Gordian solution—scarcely in keeping with the teachings of the philosopher after whom he had been named. His eye encompassed the triangle made by the two sheets of paper and the sinister weapon.

"Here is my existence geometrically laid out," he mused, "a triangle—the bill for life and the bill for love. They've presented them a bit prematurely considering I am only thirty-three—thirty-three, three and thirty. Good old Hameroy will not bear me a grudge, I hope, for falsifying his forecast and dying of something else. He cannot condemn me to life to serve him as a kind of guinea-pig—it would not be fair."

"As for Eve, she has grown used to living alone. She is Eve's true daughter and will survive. I was never meant to be her Adam. Well, to make a long matter of thirty-three years and God



knows how many months of suffering—short—”

His pale thin hand reached for the brutal firearm. He held it fondly in his hands—like a book or a crucifix. His eyes swam with sudden tears—faintness came upon him—the tides of life seemed to be already fleeing from his body before the blow. Through half-opened eyes he saw the shining ring of the muzzle. It fascinated him. Again his lips fashioned words—words scarcely audible:

“The ring of gold meant bondage—for both. This ring of steel means release—for both. It may be as difficult for a rich man to enter heaven as for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. But here’s a tiny orifice through which a poor fool may pass into a good, sound sleep.”

His will, springing into one soaring stream of resolution bade his finger fire. And the finger obeyed.

Grey mist. Clouds that wallow, rise and fall. A clanging as of countless anvils. A planetary ringing in the ears—as of a thin, ethereal music, a burning vibration sweet and endless, swelling, dwindling, dying away and returning once more.

“Awake!” said a voice. “You cannot escape the law. You cannot escape life. In the blundering fashion of your fellows you sought to break the thread—by crude mechanical means.”

A figure grew plain beside him. It was a tall man clad in a tight-fitting garment which clung to his heroic form like silk and shimmered like silver. His face was august and sorrowfully serene. A radiance seemed to stream from it, a mellow light poured from his great sad eyes. His hair glittered like

a crown of crystals and curled into points like flame.

“I know,” said Sharrington, “this is fever.” Once more he drummed up all his will-power. “This is a hospital—you are a surgeon. Spare yourself a useless job.”

“The useless task was yours,” said the stranger, “and an evil task. This is not a hospital nor am I a surgeon. Yet in my way I have effected cures. I saw you—by a science you could not comprehend—and I transported you hither. In our world physical intervention as you know it in yours, is no longer necessary. We work with other forces.”

The voice was full of the resonant harmonies of precious metal. Never before had Sharrington heard such a voice nor so strange an accent. It might have been the English of another age, and yet the idiom was modern.

“You are my guest, my passenger.”

“Your guest — your passenger? Whose? Where? In what? You have interfered—I had an important engagement—”

“My name does not matter,” said the strange being. “It is distinguished if not honoured among men. You are in the cabin of the “Stellar Shuttle.” The “Stellar Shuttle” is an astroplane—such as are in common use in our system. It is impelled by intensified waves of ether and its maximum speed exceeds by far the speed of your sun’s waves of light. We have mastered forces which are as yet unrevealed to you, even though you are upon the threshold of revelation. I am an inhabitant of Ypranil, the largest planet in the system of Sirius. Our powers, the fruit of millions of years of development might seem almost divine to you. Yet there are worlds that are further advanced

upon the eternal spiral than even Ypranil."

"The environment," said Aurel Sharrington, "is more than uncanny—but I am used to hoaxes—"

The majestic figure, with a profound melancholy written upon its face, reached forth in the luminous haze and touched something that shone upon what seemed a wall. There was a faint clatter and a flash, a thin and singing note. A dark well opened before Sharrington's eyes and in this there span what appeared to be a globe of hollow crystal or a bubble with a surface of the most intense and brilliant black. The enclosure of the well thrilled with unimaginable vibrations. Across the dark, apparently liquid surface of the bubble, a small and ruddy disc swam into sight.

"What is that?" asked Sharrington.

"The planet called Earth which you were so anxious to leave," said the luminous being. "You have left it."

"I see the outlines of continents," said Sharrington, "the splashing, spatulate shape of North America, the triangle of South America—like a Newfoundland's head. But our cinematographic science is so well developed that this trick is mere child's play."

"We are travelling slowly," said the white figure, "look again."

A blush of silvery lustre swept over the spinning globe. Over its surface, like smoke taking shape, like an image emerging out of blurred distances into focus, he saw a landscape quiver into view. It grew larger and more distinct, the edges pitched mistily away at the sides, the top and bottom. Still enlarging, a city loomed up, silhouettes of buildings, domes and towers whirled by, familiar in shape, yet strange in as-

pect. Now a street appeared—he knew it—it was his own. People passed to and fro along this street, automobiles, an electric car, wagons. The door of his house opened; he saw himself descend the steps in the purple-tinted light.

"It is an interesting bit of stained film," said he, "presumably taken from an aeroplane."

"We have overtaken a ray of light that left that spot on Earth two days ago," said the stranger quietly. "We are travelling somewhat more slowly than this ray. Were we travelling at the same speed, the life you see would be fixed in simultaneousness—that is it would stand still as in a photograph—thus:"

The movement in the street was petrified on the instant, frozen in action as in a photograph.

"Naturally," said Sharrington, "the machine has been stopped."

"We are travelling at the speed of 298,000 of your miles per a second of your time—"that is the speed of your sunlight. But that is as nothing to the velocities of the ether vibrations."

Sharrington's sight, hearing, smell and touch seemed to blend into one. He felt himself transfused as in a core of ardent and intolerable light. And the thought came to him that this must indeed be death, and that it might even be some limbo in the "vast obscure," some hell.

He saw the same street, but now a house was being built close to his father's house. He gave a cry—he remembered the building of that house years ago; it was before the era of films. A street car, drawn by horses, came swaying down the street. He saw his mother descend the steps—he bent

his burning eyes upon the spinning mirror—how young she looked! how beautiful she was! He saw himself, a school boy in knee-breeches, running up to embrace her.

With incredible swiftness, with winging stretches of darkness and light, the mysterious sphere or bubble flashed and glittered and each was a day or a night recaptured from eternity.

"We are advancing slowly against the transpired Earth-rays," said the traveller from Ypranil. "They are breaking against our cosmic mirror like waves against the prow of a boat. We move at will and at ease—whithersoever we please—it is all a matter of computation."

Sharrington passed his hand across his eyes. "I am dazed," he said, "it is all a dream and an evil one—it is all vanity."

"It is all relativity," said the other.

"Relativity," murmured Sharrington, and shuddered, he could not say why, "ah, yes. Einstein's Theory—Rutherford and his system of releasing atomic forces."

"All these things we knew and used hundreds of years ago—of our years—which are as many thousands of yours."

"It is terrible! terrible! cried Sharrington. "Humanity will be lost and damned forever—the dead past will no longer be able to bury its dead."

"Only to your earthly eyes and only because Earth is still a rude, imperfect planet, are these things terrible. The past is not dead—somewhere, if you have but eyes to see it—or instruments—it is always present. Somewhere it lives—as you live now!"

"Unfortunately," said Aurel Sharrington.

"The past is preserved to all eternity," said the mysterious stranger, "it is forever flowing, forever flying through distance. Relatively, the speed of the images projected from the Earth are to some of the speeds which we already master, as the motion of a glacier is to the motion of a cataract. Thus all that is born to light flies on eternally through the dark of interstellar space. Where there is an eye to intercept and gather the ray, it comes to life. Your days and deeds, like my days and deeds, are without end, whether measured by the life of a midge or the life of a planet."

He was silent for a time, then asked:

"Shall we unravel the past? Shall we salvage something of this hidden but indestructible record? Things familiar to you from your own destructible records? Shall we read Time backward? Pursue Life downward towards its source?"

"Wonderful!" cried Sharrington. "You must accept that word as a tribute from me—for my father had taught me that my motto in life was to be *nil admirari*. Your miracles are plausible because they are scientific. One of our well-known terrestrial writers—unknown, no doubt, in Ypranil, H. G. Wells, has already ventured into this field. He wrote a book called the "Time Machine."

"He wrote it, now you may live it," said the deep and golden voice. "Shall we overleap, overtake decades, centuries, millenia?"

A sudden terror came upon Sharrington.

"Oh, no more of the Earth," he cried. "May the night swallow it up in everlasting mercy. Let no man lift the curtain—let it hide its sorrow, crime, mad-



ness, misery and death. Write your own history—or unwrite it. Leave ours alone. It is a tragedy.”

The stranger gave no heed.

“We shall pass through the years like level sunlight through a forest. Today, by your mundane calendar it is the 15th of October, 1920. I shall now steer the “Stellar Shuttle” into the light wave of the end of 1918. I shall bring Europe to your view.”

Upon the spherical reflector, with its miraculous powers of concentration and magnification, a great waste floated into view—a region bare and hideous—like one vast sore.

“The Sahara!” cried Sharrington.

“Flanders and the Champagne,” said the man from Ypranil.

Great masses of grey troops moved eastward. They resembled an enormous slate-colored serpent whose scales glittered in the sunlight. Narrow channels like the canals of Mars swallowed them up. Ruins began to smoke, out of them arose houses, flaming, spires leaped into the air, church walls erected themselves piecemeal. The buildings burst into puffs of smoke, flame and dust and spat back shells into the throats of howitzers which first bloomed with smoke, and then belched fire. Thousands of rude graves were opened; corpses were borne into battle and came to life. Dead and dismembered men rose from the ground and were whole. They embraced one another and drew swords and bayonets from one another’s breasts and ran to cover. Shattered war planes rose flaming from the earth and sailed serenely through the air. The waste of sand blew up and became green. The deep pits and round shell-craters arose under great domes of sand that were showered upon them amidst

fountains of flame, and vanished. Levelled forests leaped erect from prostrate trunks and splintered boughs. The roads were black with men, animals and vehicles pushing on towards the cities. Thousands of soldiers embarked and crossed the Channel. Darkened cities sprang to light. Out of the sea wrecks rose foaming, burst into flame. Swimming seamen leaped aboard from bursts of foam, jetsam gathered itself and streamed into the hatches out of the sea. The vessels steamed away, stern first, following a white wake, the wave curling forward at the bows.

A pageant of great capitals ensued. Paris streamed across the dark mirror. A narrow street; an open café, an excited crowd, a stout bearded man stretched upon a marble table,—he opens his eyes, is lifted to the floor, leaps into his chair, a puff of smoke, he declaims passionately to an admiring group.

“That is Jean Jaurés,” said Sharrington. “I heard him speak once.”

London, Amsterdam, Berlin swept by—crowds, traffic, newsboys with flaring papers. Vienna unrolled its glorious concentric streets. Serajevo melted into view, decked in flags and wreaths. A man and a woman lay bleeding in a carriage, again a puff of smoke, they sat up, and bowed to the public.

“What is life—what is death” asked the inhabitant of Ypranil. “Life is but a running thread of light between infinity and infinity. Backwards or forwards—all is one. You have just seen how the Great War ended—ended—as seen from a certain point in space.”

“Yes,” said Sharrington, “the gods who turn the crank of the universe care little whether it runs forward or back-



ward. All is illusion to us—their slaves, their dupes—all except Light.”

A deep sigh broke from the lips of the man from Ypranil. His voice trembled, anguish tore at its mellow music. Torment disturbed his features, tears rolled down his cheeks.

“You can weep!” cried Sharrington, “you have tears then—even in Ypranil?”

“Light!” said the stranger, “the glorious, the eternal. I was once part of light—I was its bearer—now I am fated to roam the inter-stellar cold and darkness—a lonely spark in one vast immensity.”

Sharrington gazed at his companion with awe and fascination. And now he knew that he was man. His soul widened. Visions of ineffable splendour, vast and apocalyptic burst upon it.

“Your name!” he exclaimed—“who are you . . . ?”

“I am the Dweller in Ypranil,” said the stranger, “but that is only one of my dwellings—for an hour or for an aeon.”

A silence. The astral mirror sang and coruscated.

“A sea!” cried Sharrington. “Ah! Sandy Hook! the forts! Manhattan, the Woolworth, the Singer buildings, the Flatiron—”

Plumes of steam soared from the crests of the giant city; banners flew. The streets streamed with human beings, the cars crawled along dragging their shadows. Hundreds of domes and cupolas and spires glittered. This choral in towering stone, this litany of labour—almost he heard its voice. A great emotion overcame Aurel Sharrington. Earth-sick he grew—homesick—he stretched out his hands to the scene.

“This too, said the Strange Being, “is only the fabric of a dream. I shall increase our speed along this ray—the metropolis will dismantle and dissolve itself.”

Skyscraper after skyscraper began to cloud itself in veils of scaffolding. Turrets were unriggered, finials, crests, flagpoles vanished, great ashlar sank into the depths, the steel skeletons emerged, fell apart and melted away. Soon the yawning pits of the excavations were seen, earth and sand leaped out of the carts to meet the shovels of the men who restored them to their place. The soil smoothed itself and burst into grass, children came and gamboled there.

The streets opened and disgorged beams, columns and shining tracks, then engulfed rivers of rock and earth and closed again. The city shrank, great gaps appeared. The roadways and rails of the Manhattan Bridge were taken up, the vertical carriers fell away from the huge cables, the cables writhed from the towers like enormous serpents, the towers disintegrated stone by stone. The Brooklyn Bridge fell apart, girder by girder, strand by strand, stone by stone.

Sometimes the focus or the plane of vision seemed to hover directly above the streets, then again it receded and the details of the Earth's surface broadened into landscapes as seen from some lofty peak, again these dissolved into murky continents that glowed dull red or grey or green. And then, as with a sudden lurch, the spherical shape of the Earth disclosed itself and Sharrington looked upon the familiar outlines of North America and the northern crown of ice. Light and darkness alternated and the days and the years

were as the rhythmic breathing of some all-embracing cosmic organism, the winking of some sidereal machine.

Once again the Earth seemed to swoop upward—another war "began." Grant and Lee met at Appomattox Court House to arrange the gigantic duel. The South prepared great battlefields, towards these crawled the wearied and broken armies, blue and grey, collided in a foam of smoke and dust, fire and blood, separated and marched away, all ranks filled and all flags flying. Flaming cities rose phoenix-like, out of the ruins and smiled. Gettysburg leaped to tremendous life then ebbed into the peace of green fields. Vicksburg blazed like a blood-red star, then mirrored itself in the river. The "Monitor" and the "Merrimac" were born in a welter of fire, smoke and foam, disengaged, steamed away and were dismantled on the ways. Bull Run came—the last battle of the war, and ended with the Union troops marching gaily into Washington. The Negro problem was solved. There were jubilees, dancing and feasts upon the plantations.

Sharrington saw caravans of prairie-schooners rolling eastward from the Rockies. In California men filled up great gaps in the wounded Earth and cast into them handfuls of quartz and gleaming nuggets — frenziedly, as though mad to be rid of the yellow curse.

"There are the giant redwoods," said Sharrington, pointing, "by this devolution one might see them dwindle into saplings."

"They are the oldest living things on your Earth," said his guide, "over three thousand years old. The range of my mirror reaches only to a radius of 960 years."

The great cities dwindled from the surface of the continent and became groups of huts, of tents, and then the prairies and the forests rolled over them, like a green tide. Herds of buffaloes stormed like dark clouds across the plains. Railway lines were torn up. Mail-coaches lurched and swayed between the ancient towns. Robert Fulton ran the last steamboat down the Hudson. The War of the Revolution rages along the Atlantic seaboard; it closes—the signers of the Declaration of Independence erase their names one by one from the document. Bales of tea leap from the waters of Boston Bay into the hatches of the British merchantman.

New York becomes Nieuw Amsterdam. The British cede it to the Dutch. The Indian chief returns the 24 dollars for which he had sold Manhattan. The Hollanders withdraw. The smoke of wigwams goes up from green Manhattan.

The Pilgrim Fathers leave the land with thanksgivings; the "Mayflower" bursts into sail and wallows her way stern first back to England. The wilderness triumphant,—the sea—savages—rockbound capes—hills, white beaches, swamps, islands rise and fall, flee and fade. The Earth is seized at the end of a flying ray of light and turned like a jewel upon a pin. Cuba,—like an enormous lizard basking in foam, in a field of sapphire. Three caravels moored in a bight. On a shining strand, bright against dark groves of palms, men in glittering armour, in velvet jerkins, priests in cassocks, bearded sailors, golden banners with the Madonna. Half-naked savages in brilliant feathers stand at gaze. Embarkation. The caravels set sail. Col-

umbus leaves San Salvador to discover Europe. A hemisphere is delivered up to oblivion; the violated sea recovers its sanctity and its secrecy.

The Strange Being played upon a number of keys with a rhythmic touch as one plays upon the keyboard of a piano.

Sharrington's life now began to unroll backward before his eyes. He saw himself at school, saw himself playing and even fighting in the fields near his home. He saw his mother all in black and himself standing about a grave in the cemetery. He saw this opened, the coffin lifted out and transported in a hearse to his house. A little while and he was walking the streets hand in hand with his father. His mother came to meet them, holding wide her arms.

A sob broke from him; tears burnt like fiery acids in his eyes. He saw himself as a fair and radiant child of four—of three—of two years, toddling beside his nurse. He saw himself as an infant, as a suckling at his mother's breast in the sunlit garden behind the old house. Then men and women went up and down the front steps and those that came down carried flowers in their hands. The doctor's carriage drove away.

"This is the 4th of August, 1887," said the master of the machine—

"My birthday," said Aurel Sharrington.

"Let us send the astroplane in pursuit of the ray."

The mysterious engine began to wind up the past along this ray, pursuing it into the abysses of space, this time in the direction of flight. And Sharrington saw leaf after leaf of his outward life unfold again—his mother's funeral,

his horseback rides in the Park, his meeting, his walks with Eve, their marriage, their honeymoon five hundred miles away. Then the day when he first fell ill, his visits to Mark Hameroy's office, the estrangement between him and Eve. Once he started and almost cried out as he saw Eve leave the doctor's office after he himself had just passed out of the door. The fateful evening came again. He saw himself enter the house and vanish. But he knew that within he was ascending the silent, carpeted steps, sitting brooding over the letters, holding heroic debate with himself, opening the drawer—ah, the weapon still felt cold and heavy in his hand—the shining ring, the ring—the Ring of the Eternal occurrence.

The terrified old housekeeper telephoned to Dr. Hameroy and to Mrs. Sharrington. They came, as if by accident, together, and entered Sharrington's study—Mrs. Barbour remaining below. Dr. Hameroy ran to his friend's side and felt his pulse.

"Dead," said he, "but still warm." Mrs. Sharrington gave a cry.

He twisted the pistol out of the hand that clutched it.

"Unloaded," he said, as he flung it on the desk. "I had seen to that myself."

Eve Sharrington's eyes were fixed upon Hameroy's letter which lay open and disgust broke from her lips. Hameroy snatched the letter and tore it into shreds. And now she saw the other letter: My Dear Eve . . . and began to weep.

"It was the letter that was loaded, Eve," said he, as he caught the woman

by the arms and looked into her eyes, —“for our sakes.”

She stared at him and was silent. And then he knew that the love that had grown up between them was as dead as the man before them who had been the obstacle to its fulfillment.

Aurel Sharrington was not at all disturbed by this visit from his wife and his friend at this unearthly hour, for to him all hours had become unearthly.

He had voyaged into the silences and the secrecies and had returned with the ultimate wisdom of all time. A sweet smile hovered upon his lips; his whole expression seemed to say: “I am content. For I know that not only time and size and space are relative, but that all things are so—life and death and immortality, happiness and sorrow—and love.”

HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER.

A philosopher is the man who, in the midst of the bombardment, calls out to inquire what the fight is about.

The troublesome feature of love is that it is a crime which one cannot commit without an accomplice.—*Baudelaire*.

He was a bold man who first swallowed an oyster.

Wisdom is folly grown haggard.



## The Brazen Verses

*"Time shakes his feathers through the fields of space,  
A swooping falcon in a headlong race—  
Racing wherefrom? whereto?"* That is but air  
You vomit speaking, idle questioner.  
The fields of space themselves and flying time  
Are phantoms only, empty as this rhyme.  
Your falcon Time's a self-devouring wraith,  
Space even such, and even such is death.

### II.

*"Then what-a-devil saves us? We are are lost  
If all that predicates us is a ghost."*  
Lost then you are. All solid things that swarm  
And hurtle in this universal storm,  
Suns, constellations, palaces of form,  
Melt into nothingness and pass away.  
Tomorrow is already yesterday.

### III.

*"Lost, lost, all lost 'twixt Hell and Heaven?"*  
Ay, lost, all lost, and hell and heaven even.  
You and your fancy that so magnifies  
You and your beauty in your fondling eyes—  
You and your beauty and your self itself  
Nimbly turn nothing like a goblin elf.  
You and your beauty are a ghostly bubble;  
Naught could preserve you, were you worth the trouble.

### IV.

*"Tell me, grey Pythagoras, what might I be,  
Who rouse you so to fury?"* A sort of goblin flea.  
Leaping out of nothing into nihility.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## The Rendezvous

**I**T was at the ball of Prospero. Ancillato the poet, with his ruffles and lace and long curling hair, approached the Contessa Violante arm-in-arm with a stranger.

"To those who dislike me, my lady," he said, "I introduce my friends."

"A delicate revenge, my lord," murmured Violante.

"You are too kind," said Ancillato, nettled.

"Ah, I've ceased being kind."

"Shall you miss it?" And Ancillato turned away, leaving the new cavalier to the mercy of the beautiful lady.

As he picked his way daintily down the gilded room, through groups of human beings more porcelain than Dresden dolls, the poet reflected that there was still acid on that lovely tongue. The Contessa could not forget him; but must one be sorry for people who are sorry for themselves? None of us should be sad long about anything, nor could we if we forgot ourselves in being kind to others! Ancillato sighed.

An easier way out of her despondency occurred to the Contessa Violante, face to face with the stranger, than the resolute quest of those to whom one might be kind. She bowed coldly to a handsome youth in black, with the blue stockings of a Monsignore. It was Dionigi, her cousin the abbé, whom she had lately dismissed because he had ill-treated her, though she had always felt drawn toward the church. What was Ancillato to her? What was Dionigi? She would replace them with another and a better cavalier.

The Contessa had thought of nothing but love since she was sixteen, and she was now twenty-six. Though one should lead such a life truly to sympathize with it, it may be guessed that Violante was too much occupied to go about looking for the lonely. And in her deeper moments she felt that her profound desire for a great passion was quite enough in itself to overshadow, on the facade of her life's cathedral, any singularities it might perpetrate there.

"Coat-tails," she mused, "coat-tails. I know my loves by their coat-tails. Flying, lost, lovely coat-tails."

"You do not like me," said the cavalier.

"You dance too well," answered the Contessa.

She wished she might understand what the signalling of his eyes portended. She felt convinced it was very bold, that message he kept flashing her; and she treasured it as one does an enticing volume in an unknown tongue.

"You do not like me," repeated the cavalier.

"You astonish me," said the Contessa, "but God forbid I should dislike you because of that!"

The cavalier pervaded her. When at the end of the ball she floated down the grand staircase on his arm, between the long lines of flambeaux, and was magnificently placed by him in her chair, with a gesture of indescribable grace, she suspected that she had at last met her master. It made her indignant, but it was a wonderful experience.

"You do not like me," said the cavalier a third time as he draped his cloak

about his shoulders preparatory to attending her home.

"I may not like you, but I am afraid I love you," whispered the Contessa, disturbed.

"I shall put you to the test," he answered, with an impudent look.

At her dressing-table the next morning, Violante considered the possible termination of an affair with the stranger. It promised to be unusual. Her common-sense told her to incriminate as large a portion of the race as possible, and she called to her maid to write in her diary, "I am sorry for young persons whose energy is not conscientiously directed to the achievement of a grand passion." She then dictated a new creed to strengthen herself: "Not to cease the endeavor to be attractive, reserved and sensitive; but to pass now to farther aims, to be a leader, to let my voice sound as resonantly as possible for *l'amour*."

This done and recorded, the Contessa herself took a quill, and with flaming cheeks wrote to the cavalier, promising to meet him that very afternoon. Never before had she been so precipitate. But she reflected that there is no tomorrow for lovers except what they make for themselves.

She left the villa in the cool of the afternoon, going out by the formal garden and crossing the hedge. It was a half hour's stroll to the lake, on a path which grew more wild as it wound through flowering bushes towards a declining sun.

Though she had purposely come a little late, the cavalier was not at the appointed spot. She gazed disconsolately at the sandy beach, the overhanging shrubbery, and the great rocks. Why had she dressed so elaborately for a

rendezvous in the open; why had she consented to such a plan at all? With a sign she closed her parasol; and lifting her brocaded gown a little, she seated herself on the inhospitable sand.

Dionigi had been a great disappointment to Violante. He had at times ventured to ignore her without convincing her that she deserved to be ignored. That was his first offense. He was one of those solitary boys, always humorous and always beautiful, whom an elegant woman admits to companionship before they have begun to master the forms of address which make a man indispensable. Yet to speak truly, the Contessa had not found Dionigi as tender as he might have been. Epigrammatic he was, and adroit; but what is love? Violante had asked herself as she gave the youth his *congé*—what is love without a little kindness?

Before Dionigi there had been Ancillato, the poet. A poet can never convince others of their inferiority to him. It is not his business to. He praises people to heaven, till they marvel at themselves; and then he wanders peacefully on, and lets them fall to earth without a parachute. It is cruel, but it is poetry. Violante had watched in positive disbelief the open progress of her butterfly towards another flower. She wondered whether it would ever be possible to make a poet into a man; and as soon as she could, she thrust the painful experience from her mind.

Before Ancillato there had been Don Diego, the eternally jesting, the soldier of fortune, prompt at dinners. Don Diego had conversed with her on equal terms, never imagining the depths in her soul which cried out for exploration. A simple man, he treated her as one human being naturally treats another.

But one can never achieve a grand passion that way. Before Diego, there had been Sixtus, and the others. Sitting with chin in palm, the Contessa languidly reflected that however singular her lot had been, she had at least always had a youth to deal with; but alas, her present lover was eluding her!

She rose, and walked to and fro, digging the sand with her parasol. Yet as she gazed about her at the hills across the lake, and the white clouds, she remembered that her poet had once remarked in his charming unliquored way, "we are spectators before whom Nature leads her pageantry, connoisseurs to whom she exhibits her jewelled things."

In the beautiful sunset it seemed to Violante that while it might be a luxury of spirit to indulge so gentle an egotism, such ideas were a grave judgment on her somewhat frivolous days.

A madness in the shape of a blue haze stole over the evening. As it became more and more certain that the cavalier was not to appear, the Contessa relaxed her vexation, and was apprised of a feeling akin to relief. The hour was fair, and her woman's soul yearned suddenly for the solitude of the summer night. She had with her a small volume, to which she was accustomed to resort when lovers were not sufficiently entertaining; and, taking it from her reticule, she flung herself carelessly on the beach and began to read:

NOVEL, ATTRIBUTED TO THE AUTHOR OF THE MATERIALS FOR DISPELLING ENNUI.

*The isles of Shikoku are a quiet place. The sea is quiet, and so are the*

*young men. Strange things happen when the young men are quiet. One yellow boy with black hair and slanting eyes fabricated fans by day, and by night dreamt in his father's garden.*

*In the head of the Dragon is a certain star on the circle of perpetual sight. What the youth accomplished in his father's garden no one will ever know. But his twenty-nine fans—the most magical fans that ever came from the Isles of Shikoku—are themselves, when open, half-circles of apparition, and the dragon is on them, and the only star that blazes brightly is a star in the head of the Dragon, and the blazing of that star passes belief.*

*So it was that the Empress, as she mused upon her fan of Shikoku, said to her ladies, "Who would not open her heart as one opens the segment of a fan, if only one were sure that in its radius a star could be enmeshed, to blaze as this one does, forever!"*

*At the moment a figure passing was heard to murmur, "The hangings of the universe can be rented at a nominal expense. Everyone should be reasonably near a star; and music will be furnished those who dream of this."*

"How delightful literature is!" exclaimed the Contessa when she had read this novel for the third time. "But how little the Empress knew of men!"

She lay on her side and gazed about her. The haze had grown deeper, and the last rays of the sun reached through it, tapering shafts of gray and rose. Poplar sprays dropped before her, and the lake and hills beneath them were like phantoms on a silk screen, brushed over heedlessly with the splendours of the dying day. The foliage by the shore



became unearthly; or perhaps it was the glassy lake which suspended all as in a dream.

The Contessa felt her eyes fill to overflowing. A presence lived behind the exquisite hour, something more tender, something indeed more passionate, than her rarest moments had imagined. She began to receive messages from no human fingers,—messages like the sea, washing towards her in long tides. And now she knew at last that she was possessed; that she was overpowered, absorbed in a greater life than her own.

Hours and hours afterward she took the path to the villa. As she came near

the garden she might have seen, if she had looked, a cloaked figure leaning upon the hedge and awaiting her. But she did not look. The figure advanced apologetically toward her, and threw back his cape; but she remained oblivious. It was the tardy cavalier. She passed him, her eyes full of a far splendor. She passed so close to him that she brushed his arm; but she was a million miles away from any consciousness that he was there, and he saw it plainly. He started after her, surprised and mortified, wondering who could have displaced him.

HANIEL LONG.

## Her Hair

The Princess sits in her tower room  
 Dreaming into her looking glass.  
 Dark tortoise shell goes in and out  
 Of the long gold of her hair.  
 "Sometimes I think it's the sunlight I'm combing,  
 My beautiful Princess," her handmaiden whispers.  
 But the Princess remembers another  
 Who kissed it pinned high in a soft yellow knot.  
 He said that it was like hay, as he kissed it,  
 Like hay . . .  
 More beloved than sunlight, or curtains of gold,  
 Is hay to the Princess.

CAROLYN HALL.

# Dialogues of Scamander

## I. RED BREECHES

SCAMANDER

When I was a youth, I was a devil in politics.

POLYCRATES

So we all were, Scamander. I am quite certain that nobody, since the beginning of time, wore redder breeches than I did when I was twenty-one. I was a great enemy of kings, Scamander, and reasonably hard on aristocrats. I was the arch-lover of mobs in my day, and nobody could have explained to you, better than I could, the perfection of popular government. But my red breeches have faded sadly in the weather.

SCAMANDER

I am as great an enemy of kings as I ever was.

POLYCRATES

I, too, have a certain distrust of them still. And—though I am growing old at a great rate and my hair is thinner above my ears—I am as great an enemy of bad kings as I was at twenty-one. I have, however, somewhat abated in fury. I have long withdrawn from the arena of political imaginings. I hold no more fantastic mass-meetings and parades in my soul, nor do I attend them in fact. The infinite inanity of our accomplishment in that field of endeavor nauseated me long ago. I cast, practically or metaphysically, no ballots. I learned early, Scamander, that the intelligent voter, "being completely swamped, is for all practical purposes completely

disfranchised." I seldom allow my fancy to stray into the mazes of human government. But when it does so—for all that my hair has grown thin over my ears and I have some rheumatism of recent arrival—I find myself donning, faded as they are, the old red youthful breeches of revolt. With good kings I have no quarrel. But I am an enemy of bad kings as always.

SCAMANDER

It is idle to make distinctions of good and bad, when all kings are undesirable.

POLYCRATES

It has been agreed, however, by the writers on political economy, Scamander, that a king of some sort is necessary, though you stuff him with goose-down. And I think we are privileged to call that king good who is wise, cultured, and sober, who has a warm but not easily prejudiced sympathy, who has complete control over his passions, and who has himself—or obeys counsellors who have—sufficient foundation in learning and morality to decide questions of individual or general importance with a sober and unbiased judgment. And I think we are privileged to call that king bad who is foolish, ignorant, and capricious, who is selfish to the core and liable to the most insane and unfounded prejudices, who will believe anything that is told him, easily swayed by any chance wind of doctrine from whatever quarter of pandemonium who has over his passions no control whatsoever, but flies into irrational rages and furies like any wild beast, and

who has not sufficient foundation in learning or culture (to say nothing of morality) to determine with reliable judgment the simplest questions in human economy.

SCAMANDER

You refer without question to the king of Bavaria who, at his coronation, barked like a dog.

POLYCRATES

I refer to our present incumbent.

SCAMANDER

This is a democracy.

POLYCRATES

This is an absolute monarchy. A ruler of whatever sort, Scamander, and especially a despotic ruler, may be termed, for metaphysical convenience, a king. And I persist in my way of thinking that our present king, being a conglomerate person composed of the mass of our compatriots, is a devilish bad one. I personally know that he is foolish, that he is ignorant, and that he is capricious. I know that he is selfish, with no respect or consideration for his inferiors. I know that he is easily persuaded away from, or into, any opinion. I know that he is prey to a thousand silly prejudices. I know that he will believe anything whatsoever, and venture to assert that I could sell to him a bottle of pink water for a handsome price, if I would insist it was good for the piles. I know that he has no control over his passions and that when aroused he is as merciless as a jungle-brute. I know that he has no foundation in learning or culture to enable him to decide the serious question of human economy.

And in his presence, Scamander, though I may eventually be hanged for it, I have worn, wear, and shall continue to wear red breeches.

## II.—THE SONS OF METANIRA

SCAMANDER

There can be no question, Polycrates, that the immediate necessity of our civilization is a satirist of colossal attainments.

POLYCRATES

Satirists of colossal attainments appear with no more frequency, Scamander, than tremendous comets.

SCAMANDER

Nothing else can save us.

POLYCRATES

Then we are lost. The two men who have lived among us that might have reached colossal attainment in satire were, one of them, unfortunately, deficient in courage; the other, too bloated with spleen—and they are, anyway, dead. It is not improbable that we must wait a full hundred years for another, for such men are not born from every marriage, nor with every blue moon. All ages have produced twenty great warriors, poets, statesmen, to one great humorist. Most ages, however rich they may otherwise be, produce none at all. The gift of irony—which most magnifies a humorist, Scamander—is the rarest gift in the world. And if the value of literary genius were determined by scarcity, as is the case with old books, pewter and postage-stamps, Voltaire and Anatole France are priceless in a way Homer, Virgil, Milton and Dante can

never be. Indeed I have long held an unexpressed conviction that the great humorous literature of the world is the best literature of the world.

#### SCAMANDER

There is nobody else in breeches will agree with you.

#### POLYCRATES

It does not matter. My conclusion is sound, and it satisfies me—which satisfaction on one's own part is the only criterion of the perfect opinion. The great humorists, Scamander, give us not only as much as the poets and romancers and the philosophers: they give us more. Like the poets, they give us beauty—beauty of thought and beauty of style, richness and exhilaration of fancy, amusement and delight. But where the poetry of the world is, metaphorically speaking, superbly stupid, the great humorous literature of the world is almost incredibly wise. And in giving us their wisdom which we should otherwise need to seek in the philosophers, the humorists give us what the philosophers seldom or never give—that beauty and exhilaration, amusement and delight. The poets and romancers, Scamander, give us beauty and to spare; but there is very very little wit in them. The greybeard philosophers give us wisdom indeed, but it is wisdom without beauty, without delight, tedious in the telling. The poets and romancers have prattled for generations in tinkling or clinking speech that never wearies, but they have never told us anything (excepting one or two, Scamander, here and there, and these were gentlemen so complete that they were humorists too, as Shakespeare was, or madmen like Blake

and de Nerval who were divinely wise, not because they were poets, but because they were mad). It is only the great humorists who can tell us the truth in such a way we will believe it. I defy you to show me a magnificent passage of poetry in which mankind is properly drawn as a monkey, and in which it is clearly demonstrated that his destiny as a spiritual soul does not essentially matter. The philosophers do occasionally confide to us this conclusion, but they do it in so melancholy a fashion that one is as shy of believing it as of catching the mumps. Yet when we listen to the great humorists, Scamander, we find ourselves so enchanted by the exhilaration of their fancy and the exuberance of their speech that we are quite carried away and, before we know very well what we are about, passionately embrace the truth as though it were some sort of good news.

The great humorist, however, as I began by saying, is as rare as a great comet. His character is determined by rare prerequisites, still more rarely found in conjunction. The prerequisites of a great humorist, or a great satirist, Scamander, are, firstly, grandeur in irony, wisdom and art, and, secondly, courage. It requires spiritual courage to face the amazing farce of existence and it requires social courage to interpret it. A great satirist incurs danger. He may be starved, imprisoned, ostracized, or hanged. Worse may befall him. You will recall Abas, the son of Metanira, who was changed into a lizard for laughing at the gods. Without question, the profession is dangerous. Most of us, being very cowardly devils, prefer to laugh in our sleeves.

MARVIN LEAR.



# Anthology of the Lowly

BY PAUL ELDRIDGE

## ROOSTER.

The Sun was a red balloon  
Which I blew high—high—  
Beyond the mountain peaks,  
And balanced on the sharp point  
Of my crowing.  
As my head was chopped,  
I heard a loud and sudden clap—  
I knew the Sun had burst.

## ANT.

I was dragging my last load  
To my well-filled cell,  
Certain of a sumptuous Winter-life,  
The recompense of Summer labor,  
An object lesson to the idle cricket,  
When the foot of God stepped heavily on me,  
And crushed me—  
I do not complain, O Lord,  
Thou knowest best!

## OX.

It was not the foot of God  
That crushed you, Ant,  
It was my giant-hoof  
On my way to the slaughter-house.  
God does not defile himself  
By slaying greedy vermin—  
He slashes only the wide necks of Oxen,  
His chosen race.

## CRICKET

Slave on, mad ants,  
And let the hooves of oven  
Crush you and your hoards!  
I have chirped my humble note  
In the eternal symphony of songs,  
I, the insouciant troubadour,  
And now,  
This final gesture of my love  
To the grasses of the Earth,  
This last signal of my pity  
To the crushed slaves!  
Adios!

## GIRAFFE.

In vain I stretched to its root my neck  
Until it overtopped the tallest tree.  
The stars to mock me,  
Flew higher still.  
Now my shadow stretches  
Across all Infinity—  
But where are the stars?

## FISH.

The stars were not up, Giraffe,  
The stars were in the depths of lakes  
I swallowed many.  
The worms tasted much better,  
But they were more dangerous.

## ASS.

I would barter eternal Paradise  
With its infinite clover-field  
For a day on Earth,  
In which my former master  
Should take the shape I had,  
And I his,  
And in my hand an unused stick—  
His braying would proclaim to all the world  
The great error of the proverb,  
Which he always mingled with his blows—  
"Patience is the greatest virtue."

## DOG.

It is not for the spirits of Assees  
To judge their former masters  
Or their proverbs.  
Life broke many a heavy stick  
On the back of your master—  
A faithless wife, wicked children,  
Stony ground, swollen knees—  
It is much nobler to say:  
"Patience is the greatest virtue"  
Than kick stupidly your hind-legs,  
Had you understood this, soul of an ass,  
Your master would have wept over your  
carcass  
As he did over mine.

## The Dancer

I N a curiously illustrated edition of Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin* there is a strange and terrible face which some of you may remember having seen: It is the face of the bric-a-brac dealer who sold the mysterious parchment,—a forehead of immense breadth; a nose like that of Mephisto in Retch's outlines; a mouth thin, straight, and passionless; eyes large and sinister, with brows knotted above the nose like adders and rising wickedly toward the temples,—in short a face most sinister, most infernal, but withal fascinating with a diabolic fascination. Now can you imagine such a visage transformed and softened by youth and femininity, made beautiful without losing its strength of menacing wickedness; the nose a little less rugged, the eyes a little larger, the brows a little lighter? Then you have before you an idea of the dancer's face.

We sat and talked under the figtree. At least *she* talked: I listened under the steady gaze of her basilisk eyes. She seemed to speak all modern tongues fluently; had excited passion by her lithe grace and surpassing skill of limbo-curling in half the capitals of Europe. She talked about Havana, Buenos Ayres, Valparaiso, Vera Cruz, Mexico City; described Spanish dances in a mocking way peculiar to herself, speaking all the while in a voice deep and sweet as the lower tone of some reed-instrument. But the depth of the voice and its sweetness wrought an unpleasant effect upon the listener,—such an effect as a wizard's music might have, luring to danger.

"I hate men," she said, with Italian vehemence, and an indescribable gesture of disgust;—"Bah, how I detest them! It amuses me when I am dancing to think of all those thousand eyes glaring upon me, as at something they are almost mad to touch and can not reach, and dare not touch if they could. It gives me pleasure; and often when I smile on the stage the smile is not mechanical; it is prompted by a sense of amusement which is too strong for me to resist. I know that hundreds of young fools will leave the theatre devoured with a wish they cannot gratify. Ah! I hate men!"

"Of course you know as well as I do that they pester and torment us. I am burdened with letters, presents,—stuff! Love! Ah bah! In a life such as mine one soon learns what love is worth! I used to read the letters I got. Now I seldom read more than the first line! Presents? Yes, all I want.

"Let me tell you my way of treating the fools. I never answer a letter unless it is accompanied by a present,—and the present must have some value —Flowers!—I hate flowers! What good are flowers to me? What value have flowers twenty-four hours after being thrown at my feet? I would be as pleased to receive a jar of ashes or a box of sand. Do you imagine I will pick up their worthless flowers? Never! I can always find some way to avoid that.

"Then I never answer in writing—never! No woman who is not an idiot will do that. I let somebody else carry my message—always worded in such a

way that the fool imagines it is the greatest privilege in the world to be permitted to see me. When he does see me, he pays dearly for it, if he is worth anything; and if he is not—which I soon find out—he never sees me again—except on the stage. And then it amuses me to know how I can torture him.

"I never say a pleasant word to an admirer. Why, if I did, the fool would really think he had made an immense impression! I have my own special way of treating him; he always brings me a present, of course. I never thank him! Never! I look at it; find fault with it; laugh at it; mock the man, and finally when he does not know what to do, I condescend to lay it aside. That means acceptance. He buys a better present next time; every time he buys me something, I treat him worse than before. Much worse! I have tormented men until they cried,—yes, cried: the ridiculous fools!

"No; the worse you treat men, the better they like you! And you know it is all passion,—wind and foam and smoke—a fancy,—a passing beat of the blood, for which a man would sacrifice my life and happiness if he could and dared! But I know them! I can play with them as an angler plays with a fish! I sometimes let them kiss me if they are not too nasty,—or feel my arms and shoulders, smooth me down—you know the way men like to stroke a woman, as if a woman were a cat! But I have a certain respect for myself. I believe in nothing but myself—and my mother, yes! Now do you suppose that I will allow men to make me their puppet, their doll, their kitten, their lemon to be squeezed and thrown away? Bah! I can play salamander. I am a juggler

that can handle fire without burning my fingers. I can touch pitch and not be defiled. No man can boast of the contrary. There are liars who say such things about all stage characters! but what do I care? I have made men pay well for all that men have said about me.

"Afraid? Pooh! Of what? I know desperate men when I see them. I have not lived and traveled for nothing. And I calculate my time nicely. I know just what I can accomplish during my stay in a city. And do you know that no man has dared to insult my face? I mean coarsely and abusively. They are afraid of me. The secret of success in life is to make people afraid of you. Only fools remain on the defensive. I am always on the aggressive. Insult!—I would poiniard a man if I saw a thought of insult in his eyes! Law! What do I care for law? I am a law unto myself. Why, a woman has always the advantage in such cases. Suppose I say: "That man came to see me under some pretext. He attempted to take advantage! I knew how to take care of myself;—I killed him! Who will contradict me?"

"Love! Nonsense! Perhaps, when I leave the stage! But I shall be mistress. Do you think I would allow a man to say to me, do this, do that!

"I forget what I was telling you—When I allow a man to kiss me, he begins to be elated. He thinks he has an easy road before him. He begins to look confident. He becomes airy. Then the day after I refuse to speak to him, or see him at all! He feels as if struck by lightning. He imagines all kinds of things—that he has been slandered or something. He wants to make an ex-

planation. He becomes pathetically eloquent. He writes crazy letters. I pay no attention to him. He becomes feverish, furious, frantic, desperate. He would sell his soul just to be able to say one little word to me;—one little word would be for him what one little drop of water would be to the tongue of the

damned. And he cannot get the chance to speak. He thinks of killing somebody. Then is the time to step in and ask and receive. Finally they learn to hate me. That is just what I want, and that is how I rid myself of them. The Fools!"

LAFCADIO HEARN.

## Clouds

There is a splendor in the castled clouds  
That floats like ghosts of vanished Babylons,  
When haughty silence moves above the crowds  
And sunset fills the blue with carven bronze.

There is a grandeur in the peopled mists  
Dark with the secret shadows of the sea,  
Rolling to keep their hushed mysterious trysts  
With phantom Babylons that are to be.

O you who crowd the streets and laugh and cry,  
You do not realize some distant time  
Silence shall chant the epics of the sky,—  
Your dream, your grief, the glitter of your prime:—

The shadows of your towers and lights and homes,  
Shall float above some unborn city's domes.

OSCAR WILLIAMS.



# Tales of the Psychometric Reporter

NO. 3—CLEOPATRA TALKS ON WOMAN

Charles Benson, a reporter on the *Chronicle*, accidentally discovers that he possesses psychometric powers—that is, the ability to compel famous men and women in History to appear before him, provided he can hold in his hands some object that was connected with them when they were on earth. He has already obtained interviews for his paper with Bacchus and Diogenes.

“CHARLEY,” said the Boss to me on a nice Thursday morning, throwing all the editorials in the waste basket, “the woman question seems to have the swing indefinitely. They are not only amending the big Constitution, but all our own little ones. She’s got the call in the newspapers, the magazines and the books. We have got to find out what some of the dead and gone dames of the past think of this whole woman business. Who can you get on your psychometric wire? We want a big lass, one who knew all about her sex, and one who’s all wised up on what’s coming off in the world to-day.”

“Well, Boss,” I replied, “there’s quite a bundle of big girls lying around in history.

“There was Mamma Eve, who was the cause of Adam being fired out of his own little Luna Park; Jezebel, who played marbles with Satan when she was a mere baby; Hypatia, whose brow was so high that people thought she was bald; the Queen of Sheba, who was the fancy Hetty Green of her day; Cleopatra—”

“That’s the lass to go after, Charley,” said the Boss. “She’s the only one of the bunch who’s going strong yet. Why,

she’s even got a cigarette or something named after her.”

“You’re some scholar, Boss! You mean Fatima. But Cleopatra is our one best bet.”

I retired to my fumed oak “study.” How was I to reach Crazy Cleo, as the boys used to call Cleopatra back in my college days?

I might run up to Central Park, I thought, and bump my head against the Obelisk, but that did not belong to the Old Snake of the Nile, and according to the rules of psychometry I had to come in contact with something that had come into intimate contact with Cleo herself.

When I have a problem before me I fall into a brown study, and when I fall into a brown study at my fumed oak desk I have a habit of staring into a big crack in the wall opposite where I swivel. This crack had been widened from time to time by the office boys with their penknives.

After projecting my brown study into this crack for about five minutes, cogitating by what psychometric twist I could reach Crazy Cleo, I saw, to my great astonishment, a little head project itself from the crevice.

I went closer. It was a small serpent, and it looked at me with most intelligent eyes.

It opened its tiny mouth as I peered at it, and said:

“Don’t touch me, Charley. I’m the asp that stung Old Cleo to death. I got

a lot of that Egyptian wood alcohol in me still.

"The Madame's last word was 'stung!', if you want a little historical dope that has never got into print. I'm a friend of reporters, who are always being stung, and I know your strange gift and whom you want to interview. Just touch me with the butt-end of your fountain pen, and that'll establish a circuit to my old mistress, who is just now serving tea in Hades to old man Cain."

I touched, waited and conquered.

In a minute Cleopatra, the lady who played lawn tennis with the Caesars, buffaloeed Marc Anthony and did the Von Kluck at Actium, was seated in my visitor's chair. The asp hurled a shot of wood alcohol from its locker in the corner of its mouth at a fly and retired.

The Queen of Egypt was dressed in a chintz robe, had flowing red hair, wore all her opera dimples and puffed a long cigarette.

"Made in hell," she said, as she threw a box of them on the desk. "Everybody works down there. Caesar has the cigarette concession. He married Carmen."

"Well, what do you want to know, you poor boob of a modern?"

Waiving the insult against the Age and the Flag, I got right down to case-notes.

"Queen, what do you think of women to-day?"

"That's a leading question, as Caesar said to me when I asked him whether he had made out his will in my favor."

"To-day all questions are leading questions, Cleo."

"Nix on the Cleo!" fired up Her Ma-

jesty. "You moderns are too fresh. Your psychometric powers have swelled your head. I'm 'Queen' to you—see? Cleo me again and I'll sick my asp on you, and you can send for the mummy man to box you up!"

"Beg pardon, Queen, but I merely used the title we used to give you in college—Crazy Cleo. It was all a mistake. You look every inch a Queen."

"Crazy Cleo—eh? Well, you can put it down right now for your solid mahog. posterity that Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, the human ouija-board of Old Nile and the woman who made the first citizens of Rome look like the five-star editions of a blank copybook, was not crazy or yellow, or anything else, but an edition de luxe of the Eternal Feminine, and, as for the woman of to-day, that you ask my opinion on, it is she who is crazy—and cowardly.

"They go around to-day asking men for their rights, for the ballot, for equal latch-key privileges, for sex equality, for a man's wage-scale, and all that. In my day we didn't ask; we took.

"You know my father, Ptolemy (Old Tolly, the throne-lizards used to call him), died when I was seventeen, and left me all of Egypt, including its jazz joints and old cable cars.

"Well, I was born a 'modern' woman, as you call them to-day. I believed in my sex to the last layer of rouge. We are the super-men, and it makes me sore to see the women of this country to-day on their knees asking men for their rights.

"My first job—all the records of my reign were destroyed on my retreat before the nosy Luskens from Rome—was to annex an amendment to the Egyptian Constitution not only giving

women the right to vote but disfranchising all men before their fifty-sixth year, for that is about the time they begin to cultivate the vegetable patch which they call their brain.

"I advise the women of America to pull that off on you men if they ever get in full control of the government at Washington and the state legislatures. If they can't get three-fourths of the States necessary to ratify the anti-man amendment, let them abolish the Constitution and do it by the statute.

"If they are in a majority on the Supreme Court Bench, that body will decree the abolition of the Constitution absolutely constitutional."

"Now, that's just the crazy way a woman's mind works, Queen," I said, coming to the defence of Homo Meo.

"A woman's mind works exactly as it works. And there's another thing, it is time all women stopped making excuses for the way their mind works. I don't care a Sphinx for logic; logic is the absence of genius.

"My second act, by the way, when I was only eighteen and a half, was to abolish all the Night Schools of Reason in my country, and substitute Centers for the Cultivation of Impulse.

"History, I tell you again, Benson, has got me all wrong. They have put me down as a Sandow of Love, a flat-buster, a winking Wanda, a gondola Lizzie that passed her days floating up and down the Nile to the tinkle of cymbalums; but I was a great administrator for the women, by the women and with the women.

"The tendency of the times here in this world right now is 'Back to Cleopatra'!

"I knew the political and diplomatic

game backward. I toyed with the Caesars and made a bum out of Marc Anthony to give woman her place in the sunlight.

"I hadn't any more morals than the average healthy human being. I took a night off from my cares and worries once in a while and when I went by boat down to my country house on the Nile all the bald-headed Senators whom I allowed to think that they thought, swam after me doggy fashion down the river.

"I could box, fence, play Pyramid poker with the most hardened tin-horn gambler from Rome, and was never bluffed at Osiris stud in my life."

"Oh, no; I don't recommend all these things to-day—that they should be incorporated as part of the programme of the Woman Movement, but a little of it will help you lords of miscreation to find your level.

"As mismanagers of everything in the world you are in Class AA."

She grinned the grin of a Rameses at me as she stuck her dainty foot on the table, pushing to a thousand pieces on the floor my expensive china humidor.

Being a gentleman, I pretended I didn't hear the crash. Besides, she was a Queen, and, after all, there was something in what she said—although she was running true to her names, Crazy Cleo and Pussay Pat.

"Do you think, then, Queen, that woman is destined to take the place of man in everything in the future?" I weakly blurbed.

"The Queen Bee of the world is coming as sure as you are a mucilaginous boob," bawled the Old Serpent.

"Man will work for woman. You are all born drones anyhow, and your work



is all a bluff. We have always done the real constructive work of the world.

"Civilization is as rotten as your League of Nations is obsolete. We are not only going to take away all your rights, but may incarcerate you in male harems if you put up a holler about it.

"You only think you know. You men are a combination of sentimental ass and bluff—it's fifty-fifty.

"Good-by. Is my hat on straight?"

Before I could recover from my ossification she was gone.

The asp winked at me from the crack in the wall, and, before I could land on it with my paper-weight it, too, was gone.

And by all the psychometric powers, I want to see no more of her or her like!

My pride had a black eye.

BENJAMIN DE CASSERES.

### Droll Marcellus

That Death should be foolhardy and obtuse  
Enough to take *him* as he takes a goose,  
Marcellus wonders, deeming himself wise  
And much too valuable for demise.  
Marcellus says: "If spared the scythe of fate,  
One day Marcellus will enunciate  
The great, august, illuminating Word  
The gods await, and yet have never heard.  
*Cut down Marcellus!* It would be absurd."

J. B. CLUNY.

Love comes with a rushing of mighty waters, and departing leaves its victims holding hands in a swamp.

In the March of Progress the healer of old evils invariably cedes his place to the inventor of new tortures.



## Two Suicides

THE great number of unhappy young artists—poets, painters, composers, *et sic de similibus*—who have perished by their own hand and desire tempts one to a belief in the suggested affinity between genius and suicide. One might work a passable epigram out of the thought that often genius must prove its existence, paradoxically by destroying itself. Fortunately, the greater number of artists, young and old, happy and unhappy, whom the world has agreed to call geniuses, who have died tranquilly in bed of disease or old age, forbids a full acceptance of the ingenious theory. In spite of which, the list of self-slain geniuses is sufficiently moving to arouse interest and motives and causes.

The keyword, of course, is *genius*. A young poet destroys himself; at once we begin to speak of him as a genius. Before his shocking *dénouement*, usually, we have spoken little of him in any connection. Was suicide, then, the proof of genius, or the sensational hollo required to call attention to genius?

Having defined genius as exalted intellectual power, capable of operating independently of tuition and training, and marked by an extraordinary faculty for original creation, we think of a person tagged with the epithet as one in advance of his fellows and his day, and, consequently, somewhat of an eccentric—a position strengthened, it must be admitted, by the recorded peculiarities of our oldest established "geniuses." From this thought it is only a step to believing genius slightly akin

to insanity, and another step to believing the terms synonymous.

The belief in the last notion but one, is still widespread among persons who will be the first to deny the converse of the proposition—that inasmuch as a genius is something of a lunatic, a lunatic is necessarily something of a genius. If the one always is true, I see no reason for denying the other; but I do not for a moment believe the one always to be true. Suicide, however, to the many is the final proof of insanity, and, therefore, in a writing man (or a painting man) of genius.

The mistake seems to arise from thinking of genius, perforce, as manifesting itself by what we are pleased to believe eccentric signs. Seeking with obscure eye for strangenesses in the advertised genius, we find them easily enough, and when he has closed his life by taking it, we understandingly nod, as much in triumph as in pity. Now, at length, we know him for the genius that he is; he has attested his right to the name. Crime, insanity, voluntary isolation, these are significant signs; *felo de se* is proof. *Voilà!* a new genius is added to our interesting gallery, and our pleasant faith in our own anserine judgment again is confirmed. Meanwhile, the excellent fellow who not yet has been driven to this final act, wants our encouragement; and continues to want it. To obviate an easy rejoinder, it freely may be granted that eccentricity may be purely a pose; but, even so, it may cloak genius. An eccentricity may also cloak—merely eccentricity. The in-

credible folly is that of making hard and fast rules for anybody.

Now the truth must be that some geniuses (I have begun with this word, and so I shall continue to use it, although I do not particularly like it) are insane and some are not—a commonplace; but are we to insist that only he shall be called insane who has found unbearable "the intolerable evil called life"? It may be indeed that genius of a certain order is closely akin to insanity, and when a youth sings lovingly of Death the paramour, then woos and wins the sable embrace, one is fortified in the belief; yet such terms as "morbid" and "unhealthy" are more or less arbitrary, and the youth himself will tell you that they have nothing to do with art. Beauty for him is a comprehensive word, and he finds beauty where he will.

For many persons who are too greatly obsessed by Gautier's doctrine of "art for art's sake," the suicide of a young artist is the perfect conclusion, the consummate touch necessary to round out a brief and tragic existence, leaving its fame a thing of slight and sinister beauty—as complete and perfect in little as a sonnet or a cameo. Similarly, the assassination of Lincoln, for them, while deplorable on a number of counts, is the perfect solution: it ends his history with artistic completeness, and leaves his life a faultless poem. Thus we see in operation an aesthetic Destiny, terribly at work on human lives, and deeply concerned lest a false nuance shall mar the pitiless perfection of its art.

All this is fascinating and dangerous and highly immoral. One may speak of morality in this connection, perhaps, without inviting a sneer. To be speci-

fic, at this point, one does not contend that suicide is either moral or immoral; but the thought which would make of suicide a splendid and ineffable thing is as vicious and immoral as it is perilously alluring.

Hubert Crackanthorpe went to his death in the River Seine at the age of 26 years. Richard Middleton swallowed poison in Brussels at an age only a little more advanced. Both have been called geniuses, and undoubtedly *were* geniuses. But they were not geniuses because they committed suicide; which is to say, merely, that no such proof of their genius was required. Neither was loudly hailed as a genius, however, until he had destroyed himself. Without difficulty we may find in the work of both, evidences of a morbid wantonness that would make a bride of Death, particularly perhaps in the poetry of Middleton. If the fact may not be gainsaid, neither may it be exaggerated. The tales of Hubert Crackanthorpe and the sketches and poems of Richard Middleton, deeply as they are concerned often with the idea of death, obviously are the tales and poems of Youth, which ever is concerned with life's supreme mystery. Such evidences may be found in the writings of any person who ever has written; only we do not begin to look for them until a man has killed himself.

Hubert Crackanthorpe killed himself for love of a woman; Richard Middleton for loathing of life, the "intolerable evil" of which he was too conscious. Crackanthorpe, I am sure, loved life; Middleton, I think, hated it. Both died of their own wish and by their own deed. Crackanthorpe lived vividly, with a passionate interest in his fellow creatures; Middleton looked out

of a window and dreamed fantastic dreams. Crackanthorpe, when he wrote, wrote of the lives he had encountered about him, and knew; of their little joys and sorrows, their pride and their helplessness, their egotism and their humility, and in such detached, impersonal fashion that the irony and terror of life was more realistically suggested by his stark, although impressionistic reporting than any amount of comment could have made it. Middleton remembered his childhood and wove fancies out of old dreams, often very happy ones indeed, bubbling with a whimsical humor; but when he could not be a child, it was of another existence he dreamed, and his lines were sombre with the thought of death.

Crackanthorpe perhaps derives from Maupassant; Middleton almost certainly from Baudelaire. It will be recalled that Barbey d'Aurevilly wrote to Baudelaire that the only thing for the latter to do was to become a Christian or blow out his brains. Crackanthorpe belonged to the "eighteen-nineties," and Middleton to a somewhat later period, although Middleton reads much like a *fin de siècle* "master," even more so often than Crackanthorpe; indeed he is somewhat of an anachronism. But this matter of derivation and placing seems always an impertinence to dwell upon, since we cannot know all that has gone into the making of an artist, and classifying genius by periods is an extreme idiocy of pedantry.

I have used the word "reporting" in connection with the work of Crackanthorpe, and it may have been an unhappy word, for it inevitably suggests a gray picture of fact unrelieved by any touch of imagination. To suggest that of Crackanthorpe would be unfair, when

evidences of his imaginative intelligence are to be found in almost any of his tales. What was meant is that in his careful and penetrating studies he is so concerned with the cruelty of life, with the emotional crises of human existence, that one can almost believe him to be chronicling experiences to which he was a witness, in which he was a participant. Youthful as is the cynicism of his uncompromising situations—his strongest book wears the terrible title, "Wreckage"—there is a maturity about his work that is little less than extraordinary. Richard Le Gallienne, who knew him, says that "hardly another writer of his generation had so thoroughly equipped himself for his calling of novelist by so adventurous a study of human life." I do not know exactly what that means, but even accepting it for what it would seem to mean, there must have been in Crackanthorpe's work much of what Henry James calls "anticipated experience"; and we can hardly deny imagination to a young man who, in his early twenties, could write "A Dead Woman." His was the gift of clairvoyance also vouchsafed Stephen Crane.

Had he lived, Hubert Crackanthorpe would have more than fulfilled his amazing promise. The "Set of Village Tales" at the end of his second volume, "Sentimental Studies," and the "Vignettes" gathered into the little volume of that name, suggest powerfully the vivid impressionism toward which he was tending. These sad, glad little etchings in sunshine and in mist, for all their fragmentary appearance, are among his completest works.

In Middleton, the dreamer seemed ever to predominate, although often he was a bit careful to withhold the dream





from his readers. But this is true only, I think of his poetry, which, although many do not think so, is insignificant beside his prose. Life, for Richard Middleton, was a great mystery, not perhaps to be solved, but from little journeys toward the solution of which many half-revealed, supernal secrets might be glimpsed. Where Crackanthorpe was at his best in the episodic, concerned as he also was with the mystery of life, and relentlessly exposed his subjects in clinical detail, Middleton hovered on the borders of the occult, scorned anything like reality, and gave to his fancies the semblance of an allegory. *What does it all mean?* is his constant query; and, if he never answers the question, he furnishes significant clues, while over and through his tales there is a great light as of something ineffable about to be made known. There is much of what Arthur Machen calls "ecstasy" in his pages, notably in "The Ghost Ship," his finest production, and an indubitable masterpiece. Incidentally, Machen furnishes an introduction to the volume of that name, and I can think of no finer compliment to the memory of Richard Middleton than to say that Machen himself might have written the initial story. Poe, Stevenson, nor Ambrose Bierce need have taken shame to sign "The Coffin Merchant," nor Anatole France to attach his name to "The Soul of a Policeman."

Many of the tales in "The Ghost Ship" are, as I already have suggested, memories of childhood—amazingly remembered, superbly re-lived. "The Ghost Ship" will lead readers to "The Day Before Yesterday," a significant volume with a significant title, which contains much that is excellent, and so on to

"Monologues," a final medley of periodical sketches, alighter than the others, but touched with the genius of a hunter after beauty who gave up the pursuit ere it was half run.

Crackanthorpe perished at 26; Middleton at 29. Crackanthorpe loved life passionately, and was fond of "healthy" adventure and sport in the open; Middleton, seeking the beauty he could not find, save as he could imagine it, came to loathe life, I think, and probably cared very little for what he would believe its superficial attractions and allurements. Each voluntarily relinquished the life he could no longer endure. Each is now called *genius*, and is busily "collected."

The person of sense, of course, knows perfectly well that these men did not prove their genius by their tragic self-effacement. It is none the less true that by calling attention to their genius in such shocking fashion a certain glamour has been added to their names, a certain piquant fascination to their work; and unthinking persons have not hesitated to connect the phenomenon with our earlier proposition. Hubert Crackanthorpe was no more mad than you who read, although one hesitates to assert that he was unvisited by a vision of fate. Richard Middleton, although his case is more complicated, certainly was no more mad than, let us say, I, who write—*Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero!*—since, reading him, I cry: "If this be madness, let us have less sanity!"

Many a man, I fancy, has killed himself because of a woman, who, had the pistol missed fire, or the rope broken, would have made no second attempt, but have gone on living quite sanely and quite thankfully for two deliverances;



while if a thorough disgust with life as it is lived by the majority is a sign of insanity, I am personally acquainted with some dozens of apparently sane persons who are candidates for the asylum.

Hubert Crackanthorpe and Richard Middleton took their lives because, at the moment, they felt that they could no longer bear to go on living. That they sincerely believed this, is pitifully obvious. You may think Crackanthorpe foolish, if you wish to, but for him the death of Love was the end of all—at that moment, just before the plunge—and it is an emotion at which I dare not care to sneer. But I am very sorry indeed. Middleton's death must have been, partially, in the nature of a protest, despite the beating wings that are heard in his poetry. I can think of nothing which conceivably might have eased Crackanthorpe; but Middleton's beautiful writings all were placed in covers after his death . . . Suppose someone had whispered a few words of sympathy and appreciation, and it had been a bit less difficult for him to live and write and sell his tales!

Or would either, had he lived, have written as well again? It is a favorite notion that few men are "called before their time"—or words to that effect—that, at death, ordinarily, a writer

has done all that he would have done of any importance; has said, in effect, all that he had to say. This strikes one as superstition and cant. If it were sound even in theory, it is perfectly obvious that many distinguished writers of this our little day ought to have died years ago. Perhaps, however, they are dead, and we have not yet found it out; their publishers may be "holding up their arms."

But need a writer die when he has written what he had to write? When he has said what he had to say? Why, for a time, should he not be allowed the happiness of some years of leisure as a reward for his labors?... Often, poor fellow, because the finer his product has been the less it has brought him wherewith to finance a trifle of leisure—always supposing him to be an artist.

I don't know exactly what this paper proves, whether it proves anything, or whether it is intended to prove anything. What it is, is a transcript of thoughts induced by listening to careless criticism and specious epigrams, and by reading the absurd comments of learned book-sellers, in catalogues of books that are rare and expensive chiefly because they are beautiful and good.

VINCENT STARRETT.

## My Dream Remembers

The world escapes me.  
—My dream surrounds  
All shapes and shadows  
And all scents and sounds.

Noble was Nineveh:  
Raucous her men.  
But that which is not,  
Can it once have been?

My dream remembers  
How after all  
These shapes shall vanish  
And silence fall.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## Reviews of Books

### PEOPLE OF DESTINY

By PHILIP GIBBS  
(Harper, 1920)

"People of Destiny" is a proud name for the inventors of the shimmy and jazz, but it was, when Sir Philip Gibbs used it in writing this book, and is perhaps still (for all our rabbit-like evasions of that destiny) an appropriate one. When he visited the United States after the armistice and before the conclusion of European peace, Sir Philip Gibbs really believed us to be the People of Destiny. It lay with us to cement the

structure of world-peace or remove the piling. The world was then looking hopefully to us, as a leader of some sobriety in the labyrinth of entangled national relations. We were the people of destiny two years ago. Perhaps we are still. But certainly no widely trumpeted people of destiny ever scuttled out of its immediate responsibility more like a lobster than we did.

Sir Philip Gibbs, though his visit to America was a flying one, kept his wits about him and appraised us as he went. His book, sketchy as it is, is superior as

a criticism of the American democracy to Arnold Bennett's. Bennett's eye for detail was his undoing. Gibbs endeavored to get a glimpse of the broad outlines of American national character.

He saw clearly enough the farce of liberty under a democracy—was especially impressed by the complete abrogation of individual liberty in war-time—and expressed his amazement at the docility of the American populace. He was quick to note the "intolerance of free thought which happens to conflict with the popular sentiment, as ruthless as in Russia under Czarism, and the absolute "intolerance of minorities." He called us "a middle-class empire"—"a nation of nobodies, great with the power of the common man." He foresaw in the astounding luxury of wealth (a visible display of riches which is carried farther in the American metropolis than in any capital of Europe) and the "sullen discontent among wage-earners" the certainty of a conflict which will be violent, certainly, and perhaps bloody. He was not at all sure when he wrote—and is no doubt less sure, now—that this People of Destiny would fulfill that destiny creditably.

There is a nervous overtone of anxiety in the volume from beginning to end. The author, as clearly as Sir Auckland Geddes, sees the shadow of an Anglo-American break. He tries desperately, though vainly, to arrange an understanding. His last page is an appeal for mutual friendship. But in the first half of his book before he enters upon the subject of America's destiny among the nations, he merely records his impressions.

We have noted above some of his broader conclusions. But he makes,

too, several remarks of local application which are well worth attention. He remarks, for instance, that American women "read prodigiously," the very existence of the writing clan depending upon them. He says that he found among American newspapermen, "apart from their own party politics and prejudices, a desire for fair play and truth" (courageously put, but a damnation by no means faint!) He startles one out of one's wits by announcing that he was "overwhelmed with admiration for the American system of education"—but goes on to say that it was the spaciousness and convenience of the buildings and playgrounds which overwhelmed him. He notes in our motion-pictures which are attended by all classes, "the utter falsity of it all," "the treachery sentiment" or "flaming vice" which "would have a perverting effect on public imagination if it were taken seriously," (which, of course, it is). And he says that he looks for "a Golden Age of literature and art in America which shall be like our Elizabethan period, fresh, and spring-like, and rich in vitality and promise." We must hope he is right.

The book is sketchy. It is not a final appraisal and was not intended as such. It is not the body of opinion of a deep thinker or of a thoroughly critical observer. There have been many better books written about the American nation. Sir Philip Gibbs was intentionally, almost religiously, goodnatured about everything American. His visit was too short and too lively for any really important criticism to spring from it. But with his quick journalistic pen he has given us a volume of impression and opinion which most intel-

ligent American men and women will be glad to look into, and from which most of them will derive some real help in their attempt to understand or to visualize the American democracy.

J. M.

## BASIL EVERMAN

By ELSIE SINGMASTER

(Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920)

Miss Singmaster's book comes as a distinct relief in this age of morose and impolite fiction, so much of it unnecessarily sordid. She writes with a calm intensity of purpose, a passionate idealism, which is rare. Her style is vivid, fluent, yet not burdened by over-elaboration—neither terse nor lavishly expressive. She seems delightfully free from the slightly morbid desire to write *vindictively* and *only* of drab lives passed amid dingy surroundings; of slightly dirty persons, egotistically introspective, and forever consciously inhibiting their primitive impulses.

There is a wealth of subtle characterization in *Basil Everman*, a pervasive charm, a note of authenticity, which easily wins for her a place beside our two most representative women novelists—Edith Wharton and Willa Cather. It is fiction at its best; fiction written as an art, not as a rather painful duty.

Basil Everman, himself, is dead. Not having known him during his short lifetime is one of those haunting missed experiences of which life is so prodigal. However, one becomes remarkably aware of him through the influence of his personality upon certain characters of the story which opens twenty years after his death.

One sees him with Thomisina's eyes as "tall and very slender. I should say

his most remarkable feature was his eyes. They were gray with flecks of black in them. They seemed almost to give out light. Webster's eyes are said to have had this effect. If you had ever seen Basil you would know what that meant. He was extraordinarily quick of mind and speech and motion. Sometimes as a boy, he seemed to give an impression of actual flight. He had mentally also the gifts of wings. He seemed to live in a different world, to have deeper emotions and more vivid mental experiences than the rest of mankind. He was the most radiant person I ever knew—I think that is the best word for him. He was a creature of great promise."

One forgives Evan Utterly's manners for the sake of his literary enthusiasms, one feels with him that: "Basil Everman stands only second to Edgar Allen Poe among the litterateurs of the United States; of that even this small amount of work gives ample proof. It is the most deplorable tragedy in the history of American literature that the amount should be so small." One feels Utterly's anger at the stolidity, the incomprehensible ignorance and vagueness of Basil's own people, of Waltonville in general. "He used to write some" his sister says. "He played some, too, on the piano."

Poor Basil! He wore "flowing neckties at a time when neckties were small; he used well selected words when the rest of mankind were indifferent to their speech; he drew sometimes a parallel from the classics—consequently Waltonville thought him queer." . .

"He did not always come to meals on time, or go, candle in hand, in solemn procession to bed when the rest of the



family went, old Dr. Everman in his white stock, Mary Alcestis looking tearfully back over her shoulder, hoping in terror that Basil might at that moment be heard on the porch. They watched him, were embarrassed for him, apologized for him. They thought of him, in moments of unusual charity, as not quite sound."

"Are there no interesting facts about him," asks Utterly. "No memorabilia, no traditions of any kind? If he had been dead only twenty years, he should still be alive in the minds of men and women, especially of women. A man like that couldn't simply grow up and die, like a vegetable!"

Basil's sister, Mary Alcestis, the wife of the President of Walton College, is perhaps, the most interesting character in the book. Her struggle of twenty years to do an incredibly foolish thing is depicted with the light sure touch of an artist. The intense love which she still feels for her brother's memory, and her misguided loyalty to him, almost succeed in wrecking two charming young lives.

Professor Scott and his family are admirably drawn,—Mrs. Scott with a delicate irony which never once becomes mere caricature.

Thomasina Davis is a very lovable and intelligent woman, portrayed with sympathy and understanding.

Walton College, of which Basil Everman's father was president; of which his brother-in-law is president at the time of this story, "belonged to an order which was elsewhere passing. Lying a little north of Mason and Dixon's line; it resembled in many ways a pleasant Southern town." In the

eighties it had not yet "dreamed of being a 'greater Walton.' Satisfied with its own modest aims, it had not opened its eyes to that 'wider vision' of religion and 'service' which was to be loudly proclaimed by the next generation." The buildings were ivy-covered. There was a "broad street, sloping up to the college gates; here were tall trees and broad lawns, and everywhere masses of roses and honeysuckle." And the "music of bees in the blossoming honeylocust."

Utterly, in his search for Basil Everman, his visit to Waltonville as to a shrine, sees it first upon Commencement Day. "In the distance the Academic procession is approaching, the gowned and hooded shepherds of the flock leading, the boys and girls, similarly gowned, followed sedately after. From the Chapel toward which they advanced came the sound of music, a festival march well played on a sweet-toned old organ. A bit of poetry came to Utterly's mind:

"Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
What little town by river or seashore,  
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel  
Is emptied of its folk this pious Morn?"

"How delightfully Attic" he said to himself, not without satisfaction in the knowledge which made this comment possible."

After reading such books as *Time and l'Eternity* and *Glamour*, Basil Everman is, indeed, a delight. One is grateful to Miss Singmaster for many things—not the least among them her sincere belief in beauty, happiness, and unselfishness, and her refreshing humor.

A. S. L.



## ANTHOLOGY OF MAGAZINE VERSE FOR 1920

By WM. STANLEY BRAITHWAITE  
(*Small-Meynard*, 1920)

We refuse to believe that the art of verse in America is in as bad case as that in which Mr. Braithwaite with his series of discouraging anthologies has persistently portrayed it. We know that the United States is today, as always heretofore, overshadowed by England, that we have no one to compare with William Butler Yeats, Walter de la Mare, John Masefield or Thomas Hardy; that our poets, even the best that we have, are little fellows. But we know, too, that American poetry is not the sorry field that Mr. Braithwaite's anthologies of the last decade would indicate.

We know that there is no country today which has so many poets who are, within their limitations, excellent. We know that an anthology of American poems of the past twenty years, critically compiled, would be a creditable anthology—that it would be an anthology pleasing in the same way as "England's Helicon" was pleasing four hundred years ago, that it would be rich in minor chords enchanting in its variety. And most of us are sure that not since that Elizabethan period could any nation have assembled a handsomer body of small songs. There are few of us who believe that America is likely soon to produce a great poet. A nation so fidgety as this one, is not likely to do so. If it does, it will be out of sheer luck and certainly not out of any deep stability of intellect or emotion in the national character. But in the field of small songs and occasional sardonic

overtures (in which Edwin Arlington Robinson so excels) America is today the poet's paradise.

If Mr. Braithwaite had been critically assembling all our golden eggs for the past ten years, we should be grateful to him. He has had a rare opportunity. But he has from the first—the song is old—failed miserably.

The anthology for 1920 shows the same unhappy defect as its predecessors. Mr. Braithwaite, about three-fourths of the time, shows an aptitude for the selection of the non-essential that is almost incredible. Considering the "depressing drivel" with which he covers so many pages in each of his anthologies one is forced to conclude, generally, that the good poems which he prints must have got in by accident.

But perhaps Mr. Braithwaite is developing an ear and an eye for the finer stuff. This anthology for 1920 seems, on the whole, superior to most of its predecessors. There is in it more sound poetry, in proportion to the drivel and bombast, than before. It contains some excellent selections, and the intelligent reader, though he may suffer poignantly between whiles, will enjoy the moments spent in acquainting himself with some exhilarating poems by Maxwell Anderson, Louis Untermeyer, Edwin Arlington Robinson and Carl Sandburg, some beautiful ones by Sara Teasdale, William Griffith, Edna St Vincent Millay and David Morton, and a scattering of others, neither thoroughly exhilarating nor thoroughly beautiful, but nevertheless excellent, by Herbert S. Gorman, Winifred Welles, and Conrad Aiken.

F. X. B.

## Two Husbands

One man, having tired of his wife, killed her.

He did so without unnecessary brutality, in a humane and considerate manner, and all authorities agreed that she died without suffering.

He was hanged.

Another, less candid, also tired of his wife. He sought consolation in the society of others, introduced a rival into her household and treated her with such contumely that she died a thousand deaths each day.

He became immensely wealthy and was elected to Congress.

GEORGE STEELE SEYMOUR.

## Gewgaw

Puppets we  
Toys of a day  
Marionettes for mockery  
Tattered dolls a god at play  
Fretful grown and dolefully tired  
From the getting of all that he desired  
Twists and tears and tosses away  
Marionettes for mockery  
Toys of a day  
Puppets we

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## AND MARGINALIA

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## NEW ORLEANS AND THE DOUBLE DEALER

NOT the least annoyance in the publishing of a literary magazine in the South has been the claptrap of some of our well meaning, but, none-the-less, short-sighted citizens regarding the policy or lack of it which the sheet displays.

Let it be re-affirmed, once and for all, *The Double Dealer* holds no brief for democrat, republican or socialist, reformer or reactionary, Methodist parson or college professor, but is concerned, rather, with the dissemination of good, readable matter and the telling of the truth regardless of whom it disquiets.

This may mean a championing of causes lost in the maudlinity of the mob, or it may mean, simply, tickling the ribs of the *intelligentsia* over some pompous fraud. Surely, the spirit of blatant superficiality, provincial self-complacency, and hypocritical righteousness was never more rampant than in the South to-day.

But more especially, it is the concern of this magazine to assist in bringing about the restoration of a venerable city to its former standing as a cultural center second to none in America. It seems, indeed, impossible that the imagination

of a people who established here nearly a hundred years ago a carnival rivaling in gorgeousness that of Nice; who first brought the Parisian opera to the western hemisphere and maintained it for generations; who carried on, with all the fervor of the Continental, the ancient Latin tradition of a native aristocracy and romanticism, should languish irrevocably. It is our belief that this predisposition, though latent, repressed, and sluggish from disuse, still reposes in our midst, and it is our design nay, our resolve, to reawaken it.

Commercially, industrially, and structurally New Orleans is coming to the fore. But its energies cannot all be expended in brick, steel and mortar. The rehabilitation of an old city is an actual symbol of an unquenchable virility which must, also, have its outlet through the portals of art and literature, its expression in the painted canvas and the printed word.

*The Double Dealer*, with all due modesty, wishes to be known as the rebuilder, the driver of the first pile into the mud of this artistic stagnation which has been our portion since the Civil War. The magazine is, beyond this, a movement, a protest, a rising up against the intellectual tyranny of New York, New England, and the Middle West.

*Aux armes, en garde, on les aura!*

## THE ZANY OF DREAMS

"All things are possible," said the Hindu, "in this country."

Lord Dunsany, when asked if he thought the Kaiser would regain the throne of Germany, answered that it would not surprise him, because people are "so incurably romantic." Mr. Cabell has said in somewhat this same connection (the fanciful rearrangements of destiny indulged in by romantic mankind)—and he has said it in a phrase which as fine as any that has yet come out of America—"Man alone of animals plays the ape to his dreams." The American, in our opinion, not less than another, perhaps more.

The American is the perfect zany of dreams. He is the incurable romanticist.

Let any idea, any dream, pop into his head, and he is at once enslaved by it. It rides him like a nightmare. It stays with him inexorably until he realizes it. And that idea, that dream, need not be a meritorious or a rational one. Indeed the more ridiculous, the more bizarre, it is, the more certain it is of realization. The American dreams a dream and makes that dream come true. He dreams of himself as a such-and-such. In a short time, he is what he dreamed of. More, the mere fancy, the mere wayward imagining of himself as a such-and-such, may have immediate effect; in an instant, he discovers that he is that such-and-such.

This "aping of dreams" has been the glory of America, as it may be the death.

The American dreamed of himself as a master of money. He became that, with millions. In playing the ape to his grandiose dreams, he produced like magic railroads and power-houses, bridges, canals, electricity and torpedoes and gattling guns. He dreamed of himself as industrially powerful: So he became.

But he dreamed too of chivalry and romance and forgotten splendors. Suddenly he was a Grand Factotum of the Mystic Flame, a Flamboyant Ineffable with "an ormolu sword," a High Priest, marching in a parade. He had an apocalyptic vision of mob rule. Suddenly he had it—with initiative, referendum and recall, popular election of judges, and woe to the vanquished. It occurred to him to wonder—merely casually—if he could do without whisky. Suddenly he discovered on a grey morning, without understanding precisely how it happened, that he was without it. These things happen suddenly, in a democracy, with the immediacy of dreams. The changes are lightning-changes.

And there are so many ideas in the mind of the American democrat, so many chaotic dreams, as is inevitable in a conglomerate person made up of one hundred million imaginations that anything—even everything—may happen. We should not be surprised at ourselves in this country. The American democrat may dream a noble dream and ape it nobly. Again, he may have an apocalyptic vision, one of these days, of himself as a Robespierre or a Lenin. If he does that vision, like others, can be realized almost over night. He will ape it (as he has in the past aped the vision of promoter, world-saver and demagogue) until he is its perfect counterpart.

## THE RED "REVOLUTION"

Twenty years ago rouge was one of the badges of "the oldest profession in the world." The expression then current, *painted lady*, explains itself. Even ten years ago the carmined miss or madam was the subject of nudges and stage whispers. Now, today, they file through the streets like so many ants, carrying each her charge of crimson pigment.

It is vulgarly supposed that women daub their faces with red to simulate the healthy flow of blood, in order to render themselves more palatable merchandise in the man market. Like all publicly approved ideas, there is about one part truth to ninety-nine parts flummery in this notion. In truth, your stock woman, as your stock man, follows, not the lead of expediency, but that of her neighbors. Both are afraid, it is true, of not getting along in the world, of not succeeding, whether it be in business or matrimony, but they are even more desperately afraid of being different or out of fashion. Therefore they paint their faces as they drape their bodies or eat their meals or vote in the primaries or nurse their infants, according to what is being done: *A la mode*.

Many the flapper in the stillness of her virginal apartment who secretly whispers to herself that pallor would heighten the brown of her eyes or the natural redness of her lips. But she consigns this opinion, if she dares even utter it to herself, to that dread abode of secret sinful thoughts. Thus it has come about that the men have become used to flaring cheeks, and the average right-thinking male would as soon

parade an untinted female as be discovered decked out for slumber in a cotton-flannel night shirt. They have no eyes of their own to see, but must ever be shifting them sideways towards the next man's move. And so the game of *Follow the Leader* goes on.

If you doubt this all-blinding power of the vogue, look through the family album which once rested on the parlor table and now perhaps is hidden in some cupboard in the attic. Gaze at the clothes and see how your father toggled himself up to cut a dash—or your aunt to bedazzle the young bloods. Their sartorial preparation is now a case for giggles, and you will admire the manner in which the world has improved its ideals of beauty. But hold—the day will come when your gray clad silken legs and bobbed eyebrows will give place to a "newer beauty." And in your dotage you will sigh to a crony, "What is the younger generation coming to!"



## VALHALLA OF THE VACUOUS

As the Mussulman kneels with face to Mecca, and the French peasant towards Paris, so our own provincial makes his salaam towards Manhattan, as the dream city at which some day he hopes by dint of sweating, stealing or slave driving to eventually arrive. There is an itch in the legs of the American outlander that will be cured, so he conceives, only when he has landed in that Paradise of the plump-pursed and is able to throw the weight about on Broadway. And so the City of New York, once bought from the Indians for twenty-four dollars is being sold back to



us barbarians day after day for rather more than that.

The result is a fantastical monstrosity of a metropolis, about one-third of the population of which pours daily in and out of the gilded temples of the Demon of Unrest, tarrying long enough to be dazzled, awed and mulcted, in a few moments of the savings of months or even years.

Suppose for a moment that the impossible should happen and the gaudy enchantment fall away, what would remain of your vision of that wonder place? Well, you would recollect that you had paid the price of a pair of shoes for a single cell in one of those human hives called hotels. Around and about you to all sides other barbarians come to worship and pay. And then you would remember that in order to preserve the pretense of being a Croesus, every time you were hungry you willingly became the victim of a league of bandits and pick-pockets, familiarly, restauranters, hat boys, waiters and a whole hierarchy of superfluous lackeys, while an orchestra drowned out all thoughts of imperfection or regret.

And wafted thence on the tide of smiles, a stream of silver flowing in your wake, you taxied to a seat in a playhouse bought at a price to insure bread, butter and cake to the owner, producer, agency, speculator and hotel

newstand, and then in a gastronomic daze you laughed, applauded or wept at some rehash of "Cinderella" of "The Silver King," or perhaps a play of problems, the problem never having penetrated beyond the the box office.

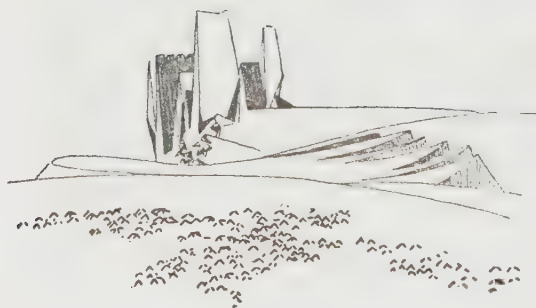
At the final curtain, a little sleepy with indigestion and compulsory emotion, you were hoisted to an iniquitous "roof" and found there again that the wages of sin is exorbitant, while over your stein of legalized beer you witness sirens from Harlem and the Bronx mercilessly clad in costumes which aim at displaying the human epidermis up to the last vaccination scar or insect bite—and so to bed.

But New York is not only the Mecca of trumpery tourists. It is the dwelling place of light for the would-be writers, artists, and theorists; for those who would save the world or corral its goods. Always it is the same American delusion that quantity must be quality. The same delusion that makes him believe that the Encyclopedia Britannica is the sum total of all human wisdom and knowledge, and because "Les Miserables" is one of the longest novels, it is also one of the finest conceptions of letters. New York is literally the greatest city in the world. It is a gargantuan bazaar, not of dreams, but of gim-cracks any of which may be had—for a price.

Of course you may be right; and certainly I cannot go so far as to say you are wrong: but still, at the same time—

—Jurgen.

AN IDEA  
FOR A  
PEOPLE'S  
HALL



HOUSES  
UPON THE  
HILLS

Drawings by Bruno Taut.

# Architecture in the New Community

BY BRUNO TAUT

*Translated by Herman George Scheffauer*

The cry goes up for a new architecture. It is almost impossible to build anything, yet in spite of this we have the yearning for something to be built. Judged by the harsh and iron standards of our materialistic conception of life, much of this ancient yearning and its new expression might seem like mere delirium. The average person, the victim of traditional environments and dead forms, the man of the herd who is able to perceive nothing but chaos in the dissolution of old conditions, regards this movement as one of the phenomena of a universal insanity.

But we who stand amidst the ruins of Europe—we know the meaning of this cry. We know that it will re-echo in the new and in the newest worlds. The old state was based upon cleavages and separations. These, to a large extent, have vanished. The communal feeling has been liberated in a greater measure than ever before. It is for this reason that the cry for architecture resounds, for architecture is nothing more than the crystallization of the communal feeling.

We, the architects of central Europe, are challenged by the cry: Be leaders, lead and build. But who amongst us would be so presumptuous as to place himself at the head?

We are conscious of the restless and disturbing element into which we are plunged. We are whirled about in it

like *amoebae*, like coral insects before the building of the reef, like agitated atoms of salt before the building of the crystal. It is not permitted us as artists even to say "yea," to attempt some clear solution of immediate problems, or remote. We are at once told to stick to our lasts, to our T squares and triangles; we are told not to dabble in the literary. "You are artists—create and do not talk!" *This*—in spite of the fact that some of us keep on producing design after design, sketch after sketch.

My friends and fellow-creators, let us beware of the skeptics. We are quite well aware of the fact that everything, every move in this world of ours is encompassed with doubt and danger. Peering born is dangerous, dangerous every detail of our lives from beginning to end—including death and even suicide. We must pursue the straight, implacable path, caring nothing for the shadows which slink about us; we must stride onward, bearing our light and holding fast to our faith.

The call for architecture is obviously a longing for a visible embodiment of faith. Again and again we have been told that we cannot have an architecture since we have no religion. Where are the prophets—they who have preached and perished? But are the prophets absolutely necessary? May not the creation of religion or the religious spirit be different from what it



has ever been before—in form and in content? Let us not forget the salt-molecule and the crystal. Are we not living in an age of intense faiths? On every level we encounter fierce and fanatic figures, ready to die, like Luther, for vision's sake.

He who today feels the imperative command, the inmost call to architecture, must construct his own faith, nay, he must convert himself into his own faith. He must be something beyond mere man—the demi-urge, the creator must be in him and therefore something of the divine. He must be finely-tempered, full of reflexes, glistening and shining like glass, as hard and sharp as steel, yet plastic, soaring and yet petrific as a concrete vault.

Our thought is embodied in matter—in the material. It is not for us to translate the longings of the people into stone; it is we ourselves who must incorporate faith; it is ourselves whom we must transmute into steel, glass and iron.

Who would venture today to point out the path towards even the immediate future? The belief that our day is giving birth to something wonderful and sublimated is rooted deep within us. But none of us can make a plan, nor give specifications of this phenomenon. The purely fantastic artist enjoys the greatest freedom, for nothing is so easy to knead into the aspect of the learned as precisely the historical. As soon as we attempt to follow the path of the old masters, whether it be in Gothic or in Indian architecture, we land in impenetrable thickets. This is a magnificent attribute of all great civilizations—they barricade themselves against the pedant and the scientist, confute and confound

him at every turn, as soon as he attempts to analyze them with instruments or dogmas. But to him who approaches them in simplicity of soul, in humility and in a child-like spirit, they reveal themselves in splendor and beatitude, like the sun emerging from clouds.

The reproach is also leveled at the creative and imaginative artist in architecture that he fails if he occupies himself with anything else than the purely practical. They say it is our "business" to build homes, homes, homes. Homes we shall build, but we know all too well that even the thing of little moment will prove a nullity if it be not illumined in the light of a great thought or an inspiration—even if this be a distant one. The harmony of human action can never be disturbed without evil effects. The forms of use and the forms of fancy perpetually complement one another. The simplest practical action is accompanied by superfluities; the straightest path across a meadow has its "dips, spurs and sinuosities."

We wage no war against the purely practical and utilitarian architect. It is true that he longs to annihilate us, but he will never succeed in this. For he would not succeed in building even a dog-house without our aid in some form or other, and in the final analysis it will be seen that it is we who are the wiser practitioners. No great esthetic genius is necessary for the construction of a simple cottage, but even the simplest needs of the dweller-in-the-house must be felt and *intuitively* felt. But this intuition fails in its radiations when it fails at the core or focus.

There is a star that gleams above every stable—not only in Bethlehem. A fast chain binds the stable to the star,





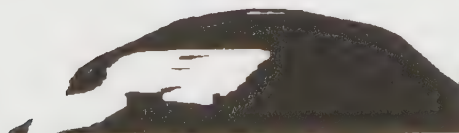
OUR WORLD  
IS BUOYANT

CONCRETE  
HALLS



THE  
EARTH STAR

Drawings by Bruce Taut.



and the beginning and the end are interchangeable, precisely as a film may be unrolled forwards or backwards. The stable, the cabin, a table, a chair, a children's home, a city hall, a palace for the people, a theatre, a crystal house for lay or sacerdotal ends, the stone crown of a city, its keep or its cathedral, a temple for the nations, a crown for the mountain-summit, the reconstruction of a peak, the reconstruction of mountain-ranges, the re-shaping of the earth's crust, the building of the star, of the star-system, of the nebula of fire—all this, all these are a chain in which all that is small becomes great and all that is great becomes small—that is, close, that is, full of human possibilities so long as the connecting thread in us be not broken.

The builder of a stable need not be capable of building a crystal house. But he will not be able to build a true and simple stable if he does not know upon which round of this planetary ladder the stable belongs. It is this heavenly ladder which we must build. We have failed to recognize its place and purpose. Otherwise, we would never have built the theatre upon the round of the stable. No man may say in what manner this ladder is to be built. All those who feel themselves called to the task have the right to essay it. No individual is to rule within this realm of ours. The *amœbæ* will achieve their rest. It is inspiring to conceive of this as a gigantic fire which throws forth an endless variety of flames and sparks. The whole is suffused by a glowing primeval force, and that man in whom it burns most intensely ceases to be a mere medium and becomes a magician.

Love of the cosmos, devotion and the desire to be absorbed in it, service to the higher thing and subjection to it, to attempt to be nothing save spiritualized and co-ordinated matter, firm, pure, sparkling and supple—that is the esoteric, categorical, imperative, to which every true architect must bow. Therefore the phantasist on paper, the present creator of the celestial ladder, is an actual master-builder, since his creations, being compact of the stuff of thought, are actual creations. And perhaps in less than a generation they may be material creations, tangible in stone, glass and steel.

Let us build in the spirit of Mozart. Our world is our world, nothing more. Light, gracile, fluent and resting upon its own laws. Material, color, space, landscape, the symmetry of axes and the like? Nothing of all these, yet comprising all these. Nor is rhythm alone sufficient. Rhythm means concentrated soldiery, organization and imperialism. Alone it means the murder of multitudes by machines—we love Life and all those who love Life as an entity of the World Spirit. We would be free of all coercion, we would feel in essentials and in elementals. We make no attempts to establish style through reason like that master-builder, van de Velde. We seek no styles, nor do we make a fetish of reason. We build because we love.

What forms are we to create? We do not know. We know only that we must build. Each of us goes his way, and discovers, perhaps, a way through the forest which no one else had ever trod. We would create purely out of the experience of our souls. A building-growth springing forth from primor-

dial substance. There are no architectural forms in this, but merely forms of growth and being, forms which do not wish to be anything nor mean anything—forms which merely *are*. Primeval generation—superhumanly audacious. There lowers, to be sure, a dragon in this path—Nature herself. A great demand will be made upon the inner purity of the artist, in order that nothing like the so-called *art nouveau* of unhappy memory should result.

We would build with all the elements that have been created—by divinity and by man. We would not imitate, but break up in order to reconstruct it according to a new law—that manifold world of history, Gothic, Rococo, Chinese and Indian architecture, the buildings of the primitives, the Nomads, and of Haeckel's "Art Forms of Nature," crystals, blooms, the wings of butterflies, etc. We would pile colored planes and cubes upon one another, shimmering glass, color, gold, pearl, silver and copper. The old language of symbols grows alive once more. The stars speak again and their constellations once more become the projection of our destinies upon the firmament.

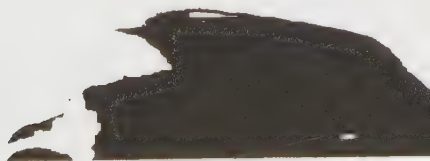
These are plunges into the sublimely irrational. The actual building of air-castles. The making of models which have no purpose, which are nothing but beautiful bodies, "things in themselves," shaped out of manifold, vivid

and gleaming material. This is to be the unpolluted source of the new forms. Mobile, multiform, conceived in joy. Infinity of form finally equals simplicity of form. Proteus equals the Child. In the day of this consummation we may see the realization of the communal will directed towards the creation of art. In that day it will no longer be considered "insane" to rebuild mountains, nor to fetter the passions and the instincts in the service of great and exuberant works of architecture rather than unloosing them in the bestialities of war.

Architecture must lead the way. Architecture alone can build the great arch, the bridge. The disintegrating haste of the age cannot be lessened without architecture in the grand manner. Only under the protection of the grand form can the small form, as in handicrafts, survive and work out its salvation. The new architecture is to give us something for which there is no prototype; it is to provide us with un conjectured relationships by means of the atmosphere, the landscape, space, material, light and color.

Are we romanticists because those conditions do not yet exist which are to give content to our works? Historians tell us that first the basilicas were built and then came the cult of priesthood. But that, too, is a matter of indifference to us. We build because we must.

We are very pleasant atoms—Voltaire



# Menagerie

BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

What things are these within me, gaunt and growling,  
That snarl and lash themselves till they are maimed?  
What whips and rods belabor them till, howling,  
They crouch in corners, beaten but untamed?

My thoughts are beasts locked up in stubborn cages,  
Dazzled by day, they dare not venture out.  
But darkness maddens them; in nightly rages  
Thy break their bars and roar and prow about.

And some glide like a wind, and others tower  
Above their sleeping guardians, as they play  
Or feed or bathe in blood. And all have power  
Ungessed at in the cowering brutes of day.

How can I rid myself of these destroyers  
Of my soul's unity and hardihood?  
What if some day I called these old annoyers  
And swung the bars, and let them out for good?



# The Candymaker

BY WILLIAM SAPHIER

The green leaves of an oak shaded the door of Nicolai, the candymaker. A heavy branch caressed the flat-topped roof and cut the straight lines of the wall. It seemed as if the little house had crawled up to the giant and nestled quietly against its trunk. The oak seemed supported by the one it protected. A very human relation.

The daily life took place within a blue door frame in a white wall. Nicolai in the background, a lean, sinewy figure moving rhythmically back and forth. A short lump of taffy became long as he leaned backward and pulled the taffy with him. It became short and thick as he leaned forward. A pendulum, hanging from a nail by a red-colored piece of taffy. In the doorway sat his wife, garbed in Hungarian custom, under the candymaker's violin. Her heavy, long braids danced on her back to the song of an embroidery needle on a new shirt for Nicolai.

These quiet, everyday doings in the blue frame of the door were a mask to a rather fierce life inside the low cottage. A drab curtain for the passerby, who could see only the sugar boiling in a low brick oven. The sugar boiled for hours, and Nicolai played on his fiddle during this time. The fiddle was always handy, and his wife Amanda never said no. He played mostly Hungarian dances, knowing his wife could not resist the music. She would leap from the threshold like a geyser, and hop and swirl, holding her skirts high.

The neighborhood children sat for hours on uncomfortable boards, waiting for the storm. From the kitchen into the living room, swaying between walls and as if suspended between ceiling and floor, her eyes, arms and hips seemed to be entangled in her clean legs, bare to the knees. The rhythm grew wilder, the legs flew higher. It was like a last dance, and ended with thunder. A thunder that presaged kisses, long kisses and savage embraces, turning suddenly into a fierce quarrel. This ended in an unaccountable quiet and an unpenetrable peace. The main actors would disappear, the children disperse satisfied, but a bit curious. . . that quiet.

Nicolai was active every waking minute. He chopped wood, he made candy, he sold it, and he played the violin. His wife had time to dream, she had time to look at the passersby over the neighbors' fences, she had time to listen to the wind that came from Hungary, her home; to the street cries of fruit vendors and once in a while to Stoica, the gypsy fiddler, a neighbor. She sat in her blue doorway and dreamed of the thin-faced and fair-haired Nicolai who made her dance. His sharp bow seemed to shoot the sounds through her feet. She dreamed of Stoica. His longing fiddle made her cry. Nicolai had a pointed moustache. Stoica had a bushy black moustache. His big, bulky body looked majestic at times, and Amanda looked after him many times when clad in white flannels, a silk handkerchief stuck in his breast pocket, he would

saunter down the street in a carefree fashion. "It is two years today," she said to herself; two years since she left her lawful husband to come and live with the candymaker and his violin.

Nicolai was out. He had gone to the silversmith. She was not supposed to know. It was a new gold ring, a serpent crowned with a big ruby, for their mating anniversary. The day was long, cloudy, lonesome. A Hungarian wind came from the mountains and blew into her veins fresh longings. Stoica's violin began to cry and call. She did not try to resist. She stumbled to the fence which hung loosely between the neighbors. Stoica's wife was away for the day. He never played when his wife was home.

No one heard Stoica play that afternoon. No one saw Amanda pace up and down her courtyard that afternoon. Two neighbors shook their heads solemnly. They had expected almost anything from this fierce tempered woman. But a gipsy—a gipsy.

The candymaker came home late in the afternoon. His eager eyes found no light in the house. Instead of the customary heat from the stove he was met by a chill as he entered the kitchen. He walked cautiously through the house, struck a match, lit the lamp, looked round, and closed his eyes. Slowly he made his way into the kitchen, took up the fiddle, and played one of those dances furiously, but did not finish. He laid down his fiddle, walked out of the house, walked round it, and began asking questions. He did not have to ask much. The neighborhood was aflame with the news.

How could she? He shook his head. With Stoica the gipsy. His heart grew

bitter. Anyone, anyone but that gipsy. Soon he changed his mind, however. No, no, no, no one was better than he, Nicolai. How could she? How dared she? Back into the house he ran. He examined his gun, was glad of its reliable appearance, and stuck it in his pocket. He stopped in front of the violin. Should he take it along on his last journey? He hesitated for a moment and took it. The neighbors shook their heads again. A sympathetic old man told him the direction Stoica and Amanda had taken. The candy-maker, with his eyes fixed on the stars walked away almost happy.

It was a long way to the nearest town, the presupposed aim of the two lovers. Nicolai had many visions, but not one to pacify him. On the contrary, he was furious by the time he reached the main inn. His right hand on the trigger of the gun in his pocket, he entered the large wine room. It was early morning, and only a few men were at the tables. Some were asleep, their faces hidden in their folded arms on the tables. Nicolai looked across the room with his burning eyes and saw no one he knew. The waiter was willing to listen and willing to talk. Yes, yes, he had seen both last night, he had seen both go out, but the gipsy had come back after a few minutes alone, almost crying. He sat back there on the bench and drank strong stuff for a while, cursing all men. "There he is—he's asleep behind that table." This changed things considerably. It was hard to awaken the bulky, dark violinist. Nicolai was eager to find out the whereabouts of Amanda. The gipsy seemed dazed. A few loud slaps over his ears made the gipsy look straight into the

eyes of the candymaker. A crowd gathered. The gipsy, thoroughly cowed, began to cry. He knew nothing. He was innocent. He had merely played on his violin while his wife was visiting her relatives. Amanda asked him to come with her, she kissed him, caressed him, she convinced him that they would be happy in some other place, away from candy and away from music-hating wives. He could not resist. She was so beautiful and he—he only a poor, foolish man. So he listened, so he obeyed.

By this time the candymaker was bent over him like a ready bow bent to the breaking point, and with a dry voice he asked: "Where is she now?"

The crowd seemed suddenly to be taking part in the affair. They all repeated, "Where is she now?" Stoica found it hard to talk. In spite of his drowsy condition he knew fully the great humiliation before him if he told the truth, but there was no way out. "Where is she?" echoed the crowd again. Stoica wished he were the Danube. He would drown them all like rats. His hands ran over the table as if searching for something tiny and elusive. A little lie, But the table was bare. There was no crumb or something left that he might put up like a rock between himself and his tormentors. At last he looked up to Nicolai in a pleading manner. He did not know. He came to the wine room straight from his house. They had a glass of wine, and intended continuing their journey to the nearest town north. In front of the wine room were two young fellows in a brand new carriage drawn by a beautiful chestnut mare with a white mane and white hoofs, a

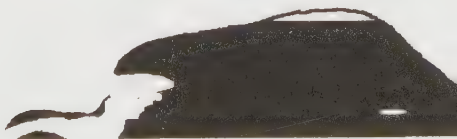
sparkling harness. A fine, braided whip in the hands of one of the young men kept the horse alert. They jokingly invited Amanda to take a ride. She accepted instantly, and without saying a word to Stoica rode away with two strangers she had never seen before.

Nicolai straightened up and smiled goodnaturedly. The crowd roared. Nicolai pulled out his fiddle and ordered drinks for everyone present, even Stoica. They all toasted to Amanda. Nicolai shouted at the top of his voice. He knew she loved no one better than him. She was simply tired. The glasses were filled again. He played like mad all the tunes she loved, and the crowd danced.

It was broad daylight. The milkmen were returning with empty pails and the children were on their way to school, when Nicolai was seen going home. He was in high spirits. He danced part of the way and played part of the way. A crowd of children who knew and loved the candy-maker well, on each side of him. Some of the dogs of the neighborhood ran ahead of him barking. People came out of their houses and lined both sides of the street.

Far behind this merry crowd came a heavy, crouching, drooping, dark figure—Stoica. He followed the candy-maker thoughtlessly, carrying his fiddle on his back like a bundle. He seemed unconscious of all about him. His flesh seemed to hang on his bones like rags on a nail.

No one could understand why Stoica beat his wife almost to death that afternoon.



# Four Poems

BY JOHN McCLURE

## THERE COMES NO CARAVAN

There comes no caravan  
Out of the stately East,  
No king from Ispahan  
On no four-legged beast  
High-humped in dignity,  
To bring my dreams to me.

There comes no elfin band  
Out of the goblin world,  
No queens of fairyland  
With no gold hair uncurled  
Gleaming in glamoury,  
To fetch new dreams to me.

There comes no Chinaman  
Wagging no sheet of silk,  
No son of Chiang Nan  
With thumb-nails white as milk,  
Drunken with mystery,  
To bring my dreams to me.

I needs must build my own,  
Vapid as they may be,  
Out of the milky moon,  
Out of the jade-green sea.  
Wonder crowds close around,  
Let my own dreams abound.

## DIVES

Rhymes jingle in my pocket  
Like nickels and dimes;  
I am very rich after my fashion.  
Let me present you,  
In all sobriety,  
With a rondel.  
(I suggest that you buy something with  
it:  
You can thus discover its value).

## ON AN INTRICATE FILIGREE

The artisan with deft fingers  
Who fabricated last week  
This bauble I hold in my hand  
Is dead.  
He exists no more  
Than had he never have been.

*Yet I hold here in my hand  
This tangible bauble  
Sprung plainly from nowhere.*

O reader in ninety years  
Regarding this sheet of silk  
And these deft words  
Neatly written in ink,  
I am dead also  
And exist no more  
Than had I never have been.

*Yet may you well regard curiously  
This tangible bauble.*

## THE INEFFABLE NAME

I have beheld Him in the form  
Of a most monstrous thunderstorm  
Go wheeling with titanic glee  
Across the waters of the sea.  
He rides the tempest blithe and hot,  
As though it were a chariot.

I have beheld His quiet face  
In a moon-haunted woodland place;  
I have beheld Him beautiful  
In the still waters of a pool  
He walks, as ghosts walk, all about  
His weird creation, in and out.



# l'Americaine

BY STEPHEN TA VAN

CONTRARY to the appearance, it is reasonable that when I, a bred-in-the-dogma New Englander, venture timorously to consider the female of America, my instinctive term for her is alien: *l'Americaine*. For since first in the concrete instance she unhorsed me to a bitter fall, I have traveled many outland roads, returning to view her in the abstract, or wholesale, with a foreign admiration and curiosity.

Upon the native actually home-coming from other shores, the impression made by his countrywomen should be provocative of celebration. Some there be, 'tis true, among our ex-conscripts of the late discredited and well-nigh forgotten War, who were loath to leave Gallic arms, and the fact is well known to travelers that the Continental and more especially the Asiatic opinion of *l'Americaine* is far from flattering. Each to his taste! It is no more possible to enforce a general standard of pulchritude than one of modesty, while our beauties show their knees and the Hottentot belles would shrink with shame if theirs were bared in public. But American femininity, collectively, does break upon the vision with an effect which if not devastating is at least dazzling.

More optically arresting women move in Worcester or in Birmingham, it seems, than in any two countries of Europe combined.

Our women have more money to explode on warpaint, and more skill, perhaps impressionistic, in application.

Even so long ago as 1900, your ordinary New York blonde—second cousin to some arrant politician—could give cards and spades to the Continental stunner, with the aid of no more elaborate equipment than one black dress and hat and her own shining pompadour.

How much wider is the margin, since hair has multiplied, and fashions have improved so fast that the "advance from Paris" becomes a back number before it has arrived!

I think the most obvious sweeping criticism that one dare offer deals with a glowing sameness.

A generation gone by, sectional type-differences were strongly marked. In that strange sovereign state just south of Worcester, for example, the type was definitely a weaker offshoot from the Puritan. When the Pennsylvania and Delaware cousins came to visit us in Connecticut, there were clashes in modes and manners requiring much adjustment before a common understanding could be reached.

The Muddle West had a flurry of Bernices and Myrtles about that time: great, crashing gels who spread a barrage of perfume. I saw one Myrtle lose her balance on the steps of a State capitol, go bounding down the full flight on all points of her anatomy except her feet, and come up laughing heartily, with scarce a tress disturbed. The broad Chicagoanne was an actual fact, as well as a shining mark for the witty weeklies of the day.

Between then and now the Pacific Coast has filled and ripened, and all over

the country, except in such backwaters as the Southern mountains, the valleys of Vermont, and the webfoot district of the Willamette, the types approximate each other. Canned education, the Wisconsin Idea, the *Ladies' Home Journal*—God knows what manifests of our vaunted Western civilization—have lifted or levelled them.

One can no longer go successfully for variety from Boston to Mobile, breaking the journey to advantage at Philadelphia. The same feminine technique, substantially, confronts one at every stop. The individuals, like the types, have become less sharply different.

Thus, though I am only forty, I find memory responding to my questions with portraits of old women, fresh and vivid, while many of the young who seemed so bright have faded.

The widow of the Kentucky planter, for example, that indefatigable septuagenarian, imposing yet friendly, who could make tolerable even a rainy afternoon in a Florida hotel. She was alone, she had no money, and for a living was obliged to chaperone young matrons on their divorce trips; but she had adjusted herself to conditions, and was a valid personality wherever she went.

I remember that the car broke down in an evil, sunstruck Sahara of palmettoes. Repair was merely a matter of adjustment, but the girls grew impatient, and when an opportunity for escape rolled up, they boarded it. At last the valve responded to treatment, and I looked up through sweat. There sat the old lady as placidly on the hot cushion as though she had been on the verandah at cards.

"Why, Mrs. Piercy! Why didn't you go with the others?"

"When I ride out with a gentleman,"

said she, "I prefer to ride back with the same one."

A lesson to Youth! I could have laid down my coat for her to walk on, the thoroughbred.

And Maisie Ellistoun, active and satiric when many a veteran of younger companies—among her's were Daly's and Modjeska's—sat i' the sun and nodded, a sick bird on a sour perch. A sporting spirit if ever one lived, was Maisie, and fifty times more of a man than the son for whom she made so many sacrifices. The suitors whom she had defeated! Most of the gay boys of the Eighties had made a try for her; that clear blonde mockery of hers had echoed in a thousand halls. For only one of her lovers had she really cared, she said, and he was not her son's father. (She had no motive in lying to me.)

It was quaint to hear her describe the man, in the language of another century. He was physically powerful—"very hirsute." . . . Even in those whom we respect, there is often something ridiculous when they speak without humor of a past passion.

I see a woman sitting beneath a reading-lamp, such as is found in ten thousand native living-rooms. Her face is colorless, her gray hair is drawn back smoothly against her head. Her husband and two children are dead, her favorite daughter is far away. Her father totters dismally toward his coffin. She is dreaming quietly, not rocking. I open the door. She has not seen me for a year.

"So it's you," she says. "They didn't tell me you were coming, but your room is ready for you."

The next day is Sunday. We go to church together, she and I. None of

the others cares for church. I hear the news of the congregation. Some uncertainty exists anent the minister. He has not proved to be just the man they thought they were calling. He is well-meaning, to be sure, but a natural awkwardness, a stiffness, hampers him. It is hard. . . . She prattles on, relating to me the harmless, pious gossip with which her own family has no sympathy. She does not know that I am a radical, a free-thinker, who has traveled so far from the Joss of the long gray beard and purple dressing-gown as to have forgotten both belief and disbelief, and the discussion thereof. She thinks of me only as a friendly fellow, rather ignorant and inexperienced, but above all, young. Nothing that I could say would shock her effectively. She would discount anything, she has endured too much suffering to be fretted by words. . . . But I do not say those things to her.

Next year, or in two years and a half, if I find her, her greeting will be the same.

But possibly I am mistaken in thinking *les Americaines* of the older generation more remarkable than their offspring and descendants. Perhaps the truth is that I remember more easily those old ones who are eminent because there are so many who are flat.

Yes, I shall make my confession, at the risk of being thought a naughty boy, trying tritely to be smart: absolutely I have no reverence for old age unsupported by character. I think most old persons, especially most old Americans, and more especially most old American women, very dull and silly. And I am equally unpleasant about mother-hood,

as such. Observation has informed me that many mothers are utterly selfish, even viciously inclined.

The murder is out! You see that I did well, Rough Reader, to preface these columns with a confession of my virtual expatriation, and by consequence to acquire a patent to barbarism. Otherwise you would have flung me from the window for disloyalty to a National Idea.

Young or old, Eastern, Southern or Western, *l'Americaine* struggles in the grip of Ostensible Monogram. Inheritance of property—the determining factor in all forms of civilization—is limited among us to the offspring of monogamous marriage, as against branded illegitimacy; hence chastity, officially maintained controls the destiny of our women. Their faces must be turned from the offender in their midst. Mother must pass down to daughter the tradition, impress upon her with a moral lash the necessity of remaining in the fold of chemical virtue.

The eternal tendency of youth is to break away from bondage. At intervals we have "waves of immorality," the print-rags wave, the Godmen bubble. Meanwhile the grim battle of mother and daughter proceeds with unabated concentration, like a fight to the death in the depths of some dim sea. In almost every house in each city and hamlet, a woman decaying from maturity and dreading loneliness in old age, is bludgeoning into line a girl, who, torn by love and the habit of her mother, the inherited force of tradition, the impulses of life and youth, and perhaps passion for a man, fights desperately for breath.





The desire for freedom or the influence of the lover prevails temporarily. The girl marries or escapes alone. The older woman is driven back exhausted. But she never despairs, and after an interval returns to the attack. She speaks of her daughter's obligation, reminds her of the months when she was carried, helpless; of the care and self-denial of many years. What is a man, or ambition, between them? There is the mystical communion of women, the Bond of the Matrix, inescapable.

The younger woman is gripped. Fear of life's vicissitudes, superstitious dread of her own distant helplessness, urge her to make of her mother an altar at which to sacrifice. Gradually the cult usurps her time, to the exclusion of her husband and her own development. The demands of the ageing organism clutching her are insistent to the end. From the dead clay she turns only in time to engage with her own daughter in a similar struggle, in which she herself becomes the tyrant.

Thus the links of the endless chain of tragedy are welded.

In oriental countries many of the females who fail to fit the chain—eccentric links—are taken care of, directly or indirectly, by the polygamy which provides logical intrigue for them, whereas among us they decay in lodging-houses or cling precariously to the edges of family life. Of course more polygamy goes on, proportionately, in our cities than in Constantinople, but it is clandestine, and operates less cleanly. Moreover, as we exist in economic chaos, and are without a salutary caste system, no regular restraint can be put upon these unattached females. When carelessly set in motion, they slide about like loose chairs on a windy deck, up-

setting the unwary. One never knows when he may not be tripped by some distant connection of a brother's accidental marriage, and swept overboard in a welter of accusations.

Like her husband, the typical *Americaine* of to-day is too recent not to run the danger of commonplaceness spiritually. A product of the most reckless outcrossing, her fortune has been to lose the keen individuality of some of her forbears, without acquiring the background by which her descendants will benefit. A suggestion is in her of an unrestful town on the Western outskirts, all noise and tin and new wood. The settlers have cut down the trees to build board sidewalks, forgetting to provide for the shade. There is a comic police force and a fire company, a sewing-circle, a high school, churches, shops and a hotel, but no park or art gallery, and the library—ah, Carnegie's! . . . Such a gel may be raw, have too much juice, pursue too obviously her desires, whether for money or excitement, a man or the social good; react too violently against her disappointments, become too thoroughly a sheepface or a prig, yet shift kaleidescopically from one mood to another without nuances.

The cosmopolitane you can bet on; trained to be various within a measured orbit, she follows her code. The provincial, with no reasonable code to follow, may lack direction and poise while achieving a notable comeliness.

But the typical *Americaine*, sometimes home marvelous! Here and there, semi-occasionally, by grace of a destiny whimsically beneficent, one is privileged to encounter the White Bird, that flies on faery wings. In some strange way, or in spite of one, the crazy American social hodge-podge, without



reason at all and with no more poetry than its inevitable quota of the Eternal Rhythm, produces the phenomenon. I bend the knee sincerely.

So doing, I am again the naughty boy, but this time my squabble is against the cynics. I cannot go along with those old lads who snoot at love—dyspeptics peevish at a dish which they no longer dare to tackle—nor yet accompany the more robustious brethren in whose diet it is but a table d'hôte entrée, casually and somewhat contemptuously savored. Even less enthusiastically would I search love for the orangey flavor detected, in the manner of George Moore, by aging epicures. In fact I would divorce love altogether from the national preference for guzzling.

There is a deathless music where the White Bird flies, whatever land it hails from. The American strain may have come out of Italy, or Russia, or France, transmitted atavistically from the shore of a lake or the depths of a forest, over stupid generations. Or it

may spring, perfect, from a respectable combination without romantic ancestry. Who knows why this woman's charm is haunting, or wherefore the seventh sister holds her faith, when Sister Number Six is faithless? We say of Maud or Eloise, she has a wrist, a leg, a shoulder; of little Flame-and-Silk, met through a chance introduction on a grocer's corner, we say, "I'll kill you if you touch her."

I have confessed a foreign outlook; I am in mind an alien and a pagan. I love *l'Americaine* for Flame-and-Silk, no rule but the exception. To buy a happy day for her, I would see fifty sewing-circles deprived in perpetuity of Oolong tea, injustice done to regiments of female voters, the fur coats stripped from all taupe-stockinged gels from Portland, Me., to Oregonian Portland. It is the joyful privilege of the philosopher, who from time immemorial, having spun out all his logic, pounds the table and declaims defiantly:

"I like it *this way!*"

Women love us for our defects. If we have enough of them, they will forgive us everything, even our gigantic intellects.—*Wilde.*

## Elixir of Life

One day a scientist was experimenting with a powder which was to induce perpetual life, utilizing a guinea-pig for the research. After twenty years the guinea-pig was the proud grandfather of numberless guinea-pigs, none of whom had seemed to show any symptoms of mortality. Indeed, the last descendent and the original subject were both amorous of a young and enticing g. p., the grandmother of the one, the grand-daughter of the other.

The scientist, however, was not satisfied that his experiment was a success, although as time went on and he grew feebler the primal guinea-pig remained as fresh as paint.

Finally, at the age of 91, convinced by the cumulative evidence about him of the efficacy of the drug, he himself swallowed the miraculous potion. To-day he may be seen groping and stumbling about among the illimitable horde of immortal guinea-pigs.

## Record

BY LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL

Something sets this day apart,  
A shining flight above the rest.  
This is a birthday of my heart.  
(Some days go muted and unlit.)  
Is there no record, then, of it?  
Is there no way of keeping white  
    The glory lent,  
    The day I spent  
Sojourning with delight?

Something sets this day apart...  
A shining birthday of my heart.  
And now, unless I make it art,  
Will it vanish, dumb and slow?  
Must it altogether go?  
My visitant,  
My sudden guest,  
My glory and my ended quest?

# The Magician of Bankok

BY JUDITH GAUTIER

*Translated by Lafcadio Hearn*

Bankok becomes enveloped in darkness and silence; huge stars open their blossoms of fire in the sky; it is the hour when sorcerers prepare for their deeds of evil and cast spells upon their enemies; objects become deformed by vagueness and take frightful shapes—the palms seem full of black birds; the domes of the pagodas look like huge bald skulls; obscurity crouches in the underbrush, and one fancies that he beholds the forms of reptiles moving everywhere. The sounds of human life yield place to the murmurs of the night—to the lapping of the waves upon the river's bank, to the rustling of leaves in the wind—to the thousand inexplicable sighs which are born of silence.

See! In a street near Mei-Nam, a shadowy door opens, and a man goes forth with slow and cautious steps. He is clad in a long robe which trails upon the ground. His head is bare. He carries in his right hand a forked branch.

Suddenly a vague human form rises behind him. Whence did it come? There was no one on the road before; it could not have come from behind the trees, nor from any neighboring house. It is immensely tall, but keeps itself in a bent posture. The man directs his steps towards the river; it follows him, but its legs do not move. Long ears hang down upon its shoulders; its arms reach to its feet.

The man suddenly turns round.

"Why dost thou follow me?" he asks.

"Is it to prevent me from having the Head and the Feet? I shall walk over thy feet and upon thy head!"

The form passes before the man and suddenly moves backwards. The man succeeds in stepping upon its feet. He flings the shape to the earth and walks over the body, which suddenly sinks into the ground and disappears.

Then he continues on his way to the river. A troupe of great apes deploy across the road; they have long, pointed snouts, bristling with horny points, and make hideous grimaces, rendered visible by the light of their flaming eyes.

"Why do ye place yourselves across my path?" asked the man. "Is it to prevent me from seizing the Future, which ye keep imprisoned in a coffer of bronze? I go to seek the key which will open to me the mysterious coffer. Sulphur-eyed apes, begone!"

The man smites the air with his forked branch. The apes disappear.

He continues to advance.

Ambushes stir behind every tree; eyes flame between the branches; the soil undulates beneath his feet with slimy and formless creatures. He marches on, clearing himself a path with his forked rod. But where he thought to find land he beholds a furious sea roaring before him.

"Appearances!" he cries; "deceits, snares of the enemy! cease to abuse my eyes. I shall have the Hands and the Feet; I shall have the Head—for my



step is firm and my heart has not trembled!"

The sea vanishes. A troop of furious horsemen rush upon him. They are black as extinguished coals. They fill up the whole way before him. They gallop furiously. The man plants his branch in the earth, and, leaning upon it with both hands, raises himself off the ground. When the whirlwind of men and horses comes, he flings himself forward upon the other side. Everything vanishes before him; but his branch has disappeared.

Now he gains the bank of the river. He beholds his own wife all bleeding and mutilated, who is being dragged to the water by a man.

"It shall not turn me aside from my path," mutters the man. "The visible does not persuade me of the real. My wife is at this moment asleep in my house, with her head resting upon the lower pillow."

A frightful monster rises up before him. It seems like a living mass of red-hot iron. Sparks fly from its body. Its yawning mouth is a furnace.

"I am near the end," says the man. "Return where thou camest; redescend the stairway of cinders thou hast fruitlessly mounted! I go to seek the burning shears which shall rend for me the mantle of the Future."

The Fire Monster extinguishes itself.

The man still marches on. He approaches a tomb. It is the tomb of the

woman who was buried that very day—surprised by death *en état de grossesse*.

He kneels; he seeks to dig up the earth with his nails. He lays his hand upon a knot of serpents.

"Vipers do not breed upon newly-made graves," he exclaims.

The serpents vanish in smoke.

He continues his work. A thousand briars rend his hands.

"Briars do not grow on newly-made graves," he exclaims.

The briars disappear.

He continues to dig; a mighty wind rushes from the tomb and flings him to the earth.

"The wind blows from the east, from the west, from the north, and from the south," he cries, rising to his feet—"the wind never blows from the tombs."

The wind ceases.

The man digs again; the earth changes to flames.

"Only wood, straw, and dry leaves," he says, "burn easily; earth never burns."

The earth ceases to flame, but a multitude of demons of a frightful greenish hue, armed with red-hot goads and whips of fire, assail the sacrilege and scourge him ceaselessly. He, insensible, savage, frenzied, plunges his arm into the yawning grave, and accomplishes a hideous task.

Suddenly he leaps to his feet. He brandishes a newly-born corpse. He flies under the pale moon. He shrieks:

"I have won the secret of the Future!"



# Decadence and Mediocrity

BY BENJAMIN De CASSERES

**M**EDIOCRITY, eternal and omnipotent, passing before Originality, mutters two words: "Decadent" and "morbid," and then sweeps on in its complacent dullness, feeling sure that it has given birth to a supreme judgment.

We are sure that the Candy Kids of art who expose their vulgarity each Sunday in that Louvre of commonplaces, the Comic Supplement, in their soul of souls believe Manet and Degas, Rops and Geiger, Baudelaire and Mallarme, to be poisonous spittle from the lips of Satan. And the Comic Supplement is the Holy Script of the People. It is the simper on the face of the Golden Calf.

And from the Comic Supplement to the painter with a vogue is only the length of a stones throw. "A wholesome art," "a sane art," "a normal art"—that is, an art that is imitative, an art that is sprung from a poverty of brain and feeling, and art that glorifies its own impotency and plays the paramour to the dollar—they are the American shibboleths. For to-day artistic and political demagoguery go hand in hand and you shall mouth the phrase that crows and be flunkey to Morality—Miss Morality, if you please, with a flat chest, high ideals and a low brow!

It was Paul Bourget, I believe, who said, succinctly, that a decadent in art was an individual atom that had revolted from the mass. For in art, as in society, the whole weight of the mass is brought to bear at each moment and at each point to crush the individual

who is struggling to emancipate himself from the deadly dullness of group-standards and group-technique.

The decadent, the *revolté*, the man with a new vision, a new way, a finer perception, is always a danger to the community of dullards, to the stratified hierarchy of saintly academicians and embalmed mediocrities.

Originality wears the mien of Catalina and brings not peace, but a sword.

In this sense the brain that blossoms with the new idea, the new way—the brain of a Rodin, of a Baudelaire, of a Nietzsche—may be called a decadent brain, for it bears with it a principle of disintegration and dissociation. It provokes pain and life, and the new ideas that germinate there strike again and again at the fat face of Complacency. It threatens Routine and Habit with death; it demands a new adjustment. It is the Kill-joy at the banquet of fools and ignoramuses.

Morbid and pestilential? Yes! It threatens Stupidity with death and stands like a vision of Annihilation on the steps of the rotting rookeries of academic thought!

What mansions they build, these prophets of stale things, these dabblers of buckeyes!—all at last blown to atoms when they venture near the arsenal of an original brain with its "morbid" or "decadent" ideas!

The ancient gods awake again and again, and there is in art always one who stalks through the world weaving his

filaments of beauty into concrete images and ideas; but the cabals of mediocrity are always in session discussing its aureoled cows. The New Dreamer stands there reversing all axioms; but the aureoled cow is immortal.

## The Moon

BY OSCAR WILLIAMS

### I.

BELLEROPHON

Dreaming after sundown  
 When the mood of my spirit  
 Was like a haunting shadowy pool,  
 I could not understand  
 The sudden desolation that filled me,  
 Until I looked up and saw  
 The golden hoof-print of the crescent moon  
 And the whole valley filled with fine blue dust.

### II.

HIPPOCRENE

O shimmering fountain of the moon, your amber wine  
 Has filled the secret veins of the earth with delirium  
 And its brain with a strange music;  
 The darkness drinks of you,  
 And the gray lips of the hills . . .  
 Soon the earth will rise from its silent dream  
 And through the blue heavens will sweep  
 Pealing and wild, the golden paean of the dawn . . .

# The Theatre of Arlecchino

BY HANIEL LONG

**I**F the Contessina had a singularity, it was her love of embraces; for in her earliest youth she had known Harlequin, and had been the Columbine of many a moon. Everywhere she went her arms were about someone, or someone's arms about her. People thought it so original; but she was a flawless beauty, with a profile like music, and if she cared to embrace, she had, of course, the right to.

She had never understood the assembled hungers of which she was composed; but which of us has? To speak truly, it had never seemed to the Contessina necessary or advisable to understand anything; life was given us to be lived, and she lived it blithely. She had youth, and brothers, and admirers. Roundabout the city of her birth swept country as delicious as the garden of Eden, where hills and leaves and vapour mingled and intermingled in endless beautiful change. Here were picnics and dances, and long long walks with Harlequin on seven hills.

The way we embrace, says del Rosso, is ideally the result of all our actions, the expression of what is most human in us. What we have dreamt of doing and have failed to do, what, nevertheless, we have accomplished and become, appear in our embraces.

"Embraces reveal the horizons of life; and who shall say that in illuminated moments they do not pass beyond?" The question had once been phrased in the hearing of the Contessina by young Di Cavelli, philosopher and author of a work on cavalry tactics.

On another occasion the young man observed, "Embracing is the most inclusive plane on which human beings meet."

Her French uncle and guardian, the experienced Comte de Brosse, who was standing by, murmured, "But unfortunately it is the most discomposing."

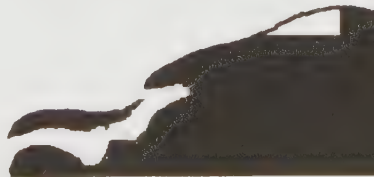
"Ah," returned the youth, "not only in tranquility may soul move to soul."

The Comte, who was of the world, shuddered slightly at the doctrine, and turned away. A few moments later he passed by the group on the lawn where the spangled philosopher was holding forth, and heard the young man say, "In a world which permits such a phenomenon as embracing, the life of the spirit is open to all."

'And that is doubtless why the races of man encourage the phenomenon so eagerly," said the Comte, with a smile.

Di Cavelli stirred uneasily in his seat. Wit made him uncomfortable, for he was a philosopher. As for the Comte de Brosse, he was a poet; but most of his works could hardly be published, as he had achieved them when violently in love.

Not long after this garden party came a great war. The philosopher, the comte, and the brothers of the Contessina-Rondanini were among the first to go. There ensued heavily draped weeks, which marched before the lady with their fingers on their lips. There was no more embracing. Her eldest brother, Gaetano, was the first to be killed, and then Di Cavelli, a colonel of chasseurs, who carried with him into action a



pocket edition of Del Rosso on Embracing.

The days and the nights passed terribly across the stage, and the Contessina saw them vaguely through curtains which would neither rise nor obscure the ghastly scene behind, curtains which made them different from all other days and nights of her life. The theatre smelt of mortality, and she sat frozen in her seat.

It became apparent that this was to be no ordinary war. The enemy was at the gates. The servants followed the sons of the family into the army; the Contessina, alone at the castello, sold her jewels. She donned the vesture of the Red Cross; and in the service of compassion horror swirled about her.

It took months to subdue the enemy. The Contessina's uncle, the Comte, died of wounds, and her younger brother, Federigo, perished likewise. Those who have beloved brothers, kind and wicked uncles will know what it means to lose them. Her brothers had been Pierrots; and her uncle—well, he had been at least a Scaramouche. As for the young philosopher, what was he? "Only in a world which permits embracing . . ." he had said; and who but Harlequin would have dared. Harlequin turned philosopher.

During the closing months of the struggle the city underwent an ordeal as grave as war, and indeed its offspring, pestilence. Academy, theatre and cathedral were closed; soldiers from the arsenal marched by with gauze over their nostrils; processions of ambulances, returned from the front, struggled for space in the streets with improvised hearses and wagons piled high with coffins, a fantastic and terrible

thing to witness. It seemed that there would never be any more embracing in the world.

When a person is loved and admired by his fellows he is watched constantly, to see how the hero acts in adversity. It is true of women. The Contessina embraced no more, but wounded soldiers came to regard her as more than a heroine, as a saint, an angelic spirit. She went among them, surrounding them with an aroma, a veil of music, which kept out the brooding thoughts that would have killed them. In great disaster we see much more plainly than at other times how important it is for man to think only of what is beautiful and mysterious.

One evening the city was filled with a pungent odor, and a haze of blue smoke drifted in from the south. Now the battle was far to the north, and one could hear only its distant bellowing. The Contessina, pausing in her ministrations by an open window, recognized a new terror in the air. The next day the panic increased, for news came of Nature unleashed in the province of the south, of forest fires beyond control, and hundreds burned to death. Then the survivors, the desolated, began to arrive, to fill refuges already full, to block the streets, and sometimes to expire there. The Contessina became haggard from too much gazing upon dissolution. But her beauty was more moving than ever, and her eyes burned with a light which supported those about her, as ecstasy always supports the lost.

Then the fire to the south was stamped out, and the inhabitants repatriated. The pestilence was gradually conquered; and at last the war ended in victory. Weeks went by. The soldiers



returned home, and slowly grew accustomed to peace. An evening came at last when the Contessina called a cab, and asked the chauffeur to drive her to her home. The time had come to resume the old life. It was an evening late in May, and a half-moon swung above the western hills, for despite war and mischance the month of May and the silver moon recur forever. Along the highway the hedges were odorous, and little flower gardens beside houses swept the perfume of dreams into the road.

She paid the driver, and turned toward the postern door with strange emotions. She could no longer weep. There was a light in the servants' hall, and she knew that her old nurse would be awaiting her, with one room in the castello ready for her to occupy. The door opened, the light streamed out upon the grass, and in a moment familiar arms embraced her.

A month later the Contessina sat one evening in an arbor watching the June moon, loveliest of all moons, sinking slim and white behind the ridge of trees. She had once more learned to weep, and she was weeping. The night before had been the darkest of her life. Coming downstairs at three o'clock in the morning in a fever, she had opened her favorite English poet at the verse, "And youth grows pale and spectre thin and dies." It was the nadir of her star, that moment. The heavens had become a deep well, and she had felt herself dropping where there was no more light.

The Contessina was the bravest of the brave; and even as she closed her book of poetry with a sob, something as infernal and as bright as Lucifer rose

up in her and cried, "It's a lie; English poet! The youth may be dead, the graveyard may be filled with new graves, but youth is quaint and mad and deathless, and shall always be!"

Something of that dauntless spirit had continued with her through the next morning. Besides, she was intrigued by a piece of gossip her nurse had repeated to her. It was being rumoured everywhere that a new and very unusual company of actors had come to the town, and were playing mysterious and unaccustomed plays in a mysterious and unaccustomed way. The Contessina, surrounded by tragedy, found her thoughts constantly recurring to these players. She had her nurse obtain tickets for the evening; and now, as she sat on the lawn, she awaited the hour when she should drive to the theatre.

It came at last, and from the rise of the curtain she thought the play a remarkable one. The first scene revealed an ancient Chinese city, when Liang was in her glory. Beautiful youths and maidens sauntered over rustic bridges or sat on seats of jade by ponds where bloomed the lotus. Curiously rojfed and turreted houses rose from hill tops behind them, with the sun burning their glazed tiles. The young people wore vesture of a beauty past modern comprehension. Among them moved a youth spangled from tip to toe, the wittiest, the sweetest, the most disturbing of them all. The part was played by a consummate actor; and though the Contessina had seen the best actors of her day she knew that she had never witnessed his equal, nor anyone to compare to him. As she slowly dared to recognize in the glorious figure Arlecchino, the idol of her childhood, she wept again,



## Starrett's Chicago Letter

Recently I received a letter from my landlord, a gentleman with whom I am on speaking terms but do not correspond. I looked at the lithographed wall calendar (the gift of a local coal dealer) and was not surprised. I knew at once that the letter needed no reply; that a reply would have been an impertinence. The communication was brief and courteously arrogant. It set forth the terms under which, for another year, I might continue to inhabit the pigeon-hole into which I had been thrust by circumstance and then forgotten. It gave me a week in which to agree to the terms.

In the newspapers, that evening, I read of the appointment of a committee by the real estate board to investigate increased rentals, of the appointment of a sub-committee by the city council similarly to investigate and to hear complaints, of protests by a tenants' organization and the appointment of a committee to wait upon the Mayor, or the Governor, or somebody. Possibly other committees and sub-committees were appointed; I do not recall.

When, at the end of my week of grace—circumstance having failed to reappear—I autographed the proffered lease, naturally I thought of those blessed committees.

I can see their members—solemn, handsome gentlemen, somewhat tight as to waistband, some with watch-chains extended fully across the front facade, and shiny, two-gallon hats. They feel the importance, the dignity of their task; and they will meet, and sit around,

and adjourn, and reconvene, and make motions, and enter objections, and sail boats in the bathtub, and slide down cellar doors, and . . . altogether, they will have a heluva time and an entirely successful life as a committee or sub-committee. Some years hence they will make a recommendation to a larger committee, which will then get busy further to attack this bothersome H. C. L. thing; and for a time the program will be repeated on a larger scale.

Enthusiastic idiots will make speeches, and enthusiastic citizens at home will say "Damn!" and enthusiastic grocers will push up the price of food; and after a while those of us who are lucky will be taken in hand by enthusiastic undertakers who will overcharge our executors.

It is a priceless boon, this living in America in a glorious day like this. The butcher and the baker may increase their prices daily, the milkmen may strike and send up the price of milk, landlords may raise the rent. No matter! Somebody will appoint a sub-committee; the meeting will be called to order, and great thoughts will be given to the world. The newspapers will print it all under headlines. Nothing ever will come of it, of course; nothing ever does. But we shall have investigated. Our passion for investigation will have been satisfied.

And after a while it will make little enough difference. "The first hundred years are the hardest!" Before that supreme philosophy, that of Descartes, Kant, Schlegel and the rest, must fall into insignificance.

Gilbert Chesterton has been in Chicago, and he is quite the most likable fellow who has come to us from overseas. Preceded by his unfortunate reputation as a "master of paradox" (I quote the chaste phrase of the newspapers), he has been humorously at bay, most of the time, since his landing on our shores. Like the professional humorist, he is expected to explode at a touch and smother his casual questioner with laughter. It is a miserable episode to be at the mercy of an American newspaper reporter, hurriedly torn from duty at the Central Police Station to interview a celebrity. G. K. C. came through the ordeal very well, and seems to be widely liked.

He did not lock himself in his room and deny himself to callers. Like the decent fellow he is, he lounged in the Blackstone lobby and exchanged greetings with anyone who cared to approach. He is not the behemoth, physically, one had expected to see. He is not as stout as Mr. Taft, although taller and built on the general lines of the former President. His chuckle, however, is very Taftian indeed, and he employs it, as does Taft, as a prelude to a story.

I talked with him for some time, carefully avoiding subjects on which I was afraid he might have prepared paradoxes, and the most important thing I learned was that he hopes some day to write another volume of "Father Brown" stories. That, I submit, is good news. Concerning jacket eulogies of novels and writers, he said: "That is one of the curious things I notice in America. Personally, I think I should be violently prejudiced against a book, the jacket of which made extravagant

claims and undertook to instruct me with reference to the author." And that, I submit, is good sense. The volume he immediately referred to, was "The Man Who Was Thursday," by Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

"That is what we call a 'blurb'," I told him.

"A 'bloorb'!" he chuckled. "Excellent word! I must remember it."

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Other visitors of the immediate period have been John Drinkwater and Sinclair Lewis, the former quiet, urbane, distinguished; the latter breezy, slangy, American. The stage lost a great monologist because Lewis was equipped with brains to be a novelist, somebody has said; and certainly he told some good ones to a friend of mine, which I have heard second-hand.

Of the Englishmen, Walpole, George, Drinkwater, Maynard, Dunsany and Chesterton have been and are gone (Dunsany is Irish, but no matter), and we are getting our breath and awaiting the next arrival. The Pond Bureau has a long list, and there are a number of re-bookings. Of native authors, we have seen only Lewis, and those whom, being Chicagoans, we have always with us. When the stream ceases and the box office is closed, it would be nice if, say, Messrs. Cabell and Hergesheimer would slip quietly into town. Mencken, on his quadrennial visit, guzzled near-beer with Carl Sandburg at Hinky Dink's bar, and denied himself to the thirsty multitude.

There must be money in this sort of thing. I think I shall tour the South.

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A film company recently announced that it had bought the right to film

"Black Beauty," and the photoplay is now showing. I have not seen it. But am wondering who "sold" the rights, and who received the purchase money. "Black Beauty" was published in 1877, and Anna Sewell, its author, died in pain within a year of its success. The English publishers bought the book outright for £20, and reaped a golden harvest for themselves. Copyright has long expired, and the volume may be (and is) reprinted at will by whosoever cares to reprint it. Can it be that the film company's announcement is only press propaganda?

Speaking of "classics," there is a new edition of *Elia* on the market, with illustrations by somebody, and an introduction by E. V. Lucas. This must be at least the twelfth edition of *Elia* that Lucas has edited. Why always Lucas? Let there be one hundred twelve editions of *Lamb*, by all means, and may they be sold out on publication day; but the proprietary attitude of Lucas toward *Lamb* begins to tire. Really, no introduction to *Elia* is necessary, but as each edition might mean \$50 or \$100 to some good fellow, the practice should be continued. Lucas, however, should be definitely put out of the running. This prolific writing-machine has made too much capital out of *Lamb*, and his own supposed discipleship, as it is.

By the way, it was not Mrs. O'Leary's cow that was responsible for the Chicago fire. It was a kitten. The facts have just come to light, through the confession of an old Chicagoan, who made a clean breast of it in the columns of the *Chicago Tribune*. As the matter has been given very little publicity, I repeat the story, briefly.

This gentleman's (or lady's—initials only accompanied the statement) father and mother were married in St. Paul. The room in which they were married had a white cloth tacked down over the carpet, and an altar arranged at one side. Just before the wedding party entered, a small black kitten ran into the room and jumped about on the white cloth and in front of the altar until it was driven out.

Some said this was a sign of bad luck; others laughed at the superstition.

The couple traveled to Chicago on their—its—honeymoon. The night they arrived, the old cow kicked the lamp over, and Chicago burned up!

The honeymooners lost their wardrobe and all their money, and barely escaped with their lives.

The Joseph Medill School of Journalism was formally opened in Chicago last month, and many distinguished journalists broke oratorical bottles against its substantial hull on the big night. Prof. Walter Dill Scott is president, or principal, or director, and the school is a memorial to Joseph Medill, founder of the *Chicago Tribune*, and was established by the present owners of the *Tribune*, his—grandsons, I think.

Chicago's best seller, by a great many dollars, is Edgar Rice Burroughs, creator of "Tarzan of the Apes," and an ocean of sequels. In recent months, Mr. Burroughs has lived in California, where he has built himself an expensive home which, very appropriately he calls "Tarzania." His books probably are the worst that ever were written and filmed. Besides them, the works of Rider Haggard are classics. But the

illustrations made for them by J. Allen St. John are very attractive pictures, and as Mr. Burroughs is prolific and in good health, Mr. St. John probably will make an excellent living for years to come. The ill wind again, you see!

A writer in the *Sidney* (N. S. W.) *Bulletin* uses this extraordinary simile: "The night was black as the Earl of Hell's riding boots."

What a line! I would sacrifice six sonnets and as many short stories to have written it. Algernon Blackwood once wrote this line: "January sparkled, dropped like an icicle, and was gone." That, too, is memorable.

How often in the ceaseless flow of

books does one encounter a line as fine as either of those quoted? One such sentence should be sufficient to immortalize a man, and actually may give permanence to a short story by a writer a dozen of whose more ambitious efforts have failed.

My thanks to the gentleman who, in the February number, called me a "Mencknite," for, of course, he intended a compliment. The fact is, however, Mencken derives from me, although wild oxen would not force him to admit it. But I do not write Mencken's books; they are the work of a score of persons. Mencken is a syndicate.

VINCENT STARRETT.

## The Rain

"Watch me," cried a duck—"no one in the whole world is as clever as I! So quickly do I swim with my pretty coral feet,—so fast, that I gather on my back all the crystal rain-drops as they fall from the sky. Ah, wonderful indeed!"

"But I am cleverer by far," shrieked a bird, "for with my wings—my wind-born wings—I fly so swiftly over the tops of trees, darting here and there, in and out, that never a rain-drop meets me and my feathers are warm and dry."

And the rain, slipping over the edge of a rumpled cloud, went laughing down the hills.

OLIVE BOULLEMET.

# Tales in the Tragic Tense

BY JOEL TOWNSLEY ROGERS.

## LORRAINE LEE'S LOVE AFFAIR

Lorraine waited in a respectable chop house. She was one of those who also serve. One day a man came in the chop house, and looked at Lorraine for a long time with sad, contemplative eyes, and ordered beefsteak and mushrooms. Perhaps it was he for whom Lorraine had been waiting, for she dropped him a coy glance, and after the consummation of ages, gave him a club sandwich. That brought her to the man's attention. He spoke gently to her.

Thereafter each noon he came into the chop house and ordered a club sandwich, and Lorraine brought him beefsteak and mushrooms. Sometimes he came with other men. Sometimes alone. He always tipped her. One time it was fifteen cents; another time a dime. He generally paid his bill.

Lorraine noticed with what gentlemanly detachment of his little finger he manipulated his toothpick. He did not fill his pockets with them as he went out, like the common herd. He had a gold one of his own. He always wiped his fingers after eating corn on the cob. There was an air of refinement inseparable from him; he was a creature from another world.

From conversations he held with men who sometimes came in to eat with him Lorraine learned that he was married. At first that cast her into despair; but then she remembered that the truer love is found outside the marriage bond, and read again "Roxana, Queen of the

Demi-Monde," to prepare herself for iniquitous eventualities.

The coming of this love had an influence on Lorraine's character. She began to use hairpins in her hair. She seldom forgot the weekly tub. She took to manicuring her nails between waits with the chop-house cutlery. She purchased a near-cotton chemise. A thriftily saved dollar went for a quart of remarkable perfume known as Parfum de Hollihocks.

The first noon she made use of the perfume she noticed the effect on the man. He raised his eyes and stared appraisingly at her when she came for his order. He did likewise when she brought him his beefsteak and mushrooms. He did it again when the last mushroom had joined its ancestors.

Lorraine flushed beneath that ardent glance. Her heart pounded heavily; it split the near-cotton chemise. Thereafter each noon the man stared at her as he ordered a club sandwich. He was backward, but Lorraine could feel by intuition that he was preparing to speak.

One day he broke the respectful silence with which he had always greeted her. She had just taken his order for a club sandwich. He put his hand on her hand where it dallied coyly beneath his nose, tracing designs on his plate.

"Listen," he said, "you're a good girl, but I'll give you a quarter each day—" (was he going to buy her virtue for a price in silver and gold?) "A quarter each day," he repeated, "if you'll stop



using that essence of skunk cabbage you've adopted lately."

He reached in his pocket and pulled out the promised silver, striving to buy her soul.

## THE LAST OF THE TATUMS

Old man Tatum was the son of his father. And his father was the son of his father. Thus back through the proud generations.

"Young Tatum is the son of his old man," said all the neighbors.

And, hearing that, old man Tatum's bosom would swell, and he would scratch his back to hide the lofty light within his eyes.

The Tatums were poor, but honorable. They had always been poor, and sometimes honorable. They owed not any man. The village grocer had put their names in the Bad Account section years ago and scratched it off, and now they paid cash for salt and matches and suspenders when they felt the need of such luxuries.

They had their own business, conducted on a mutual basis. Old lady Tatum hoed the ground and cast the seed and gathered the corn. Little Sophronia Tatum husked it. Little Saphiria Tatum put it in the still and watched the fires. Little Susanna Tatum put the cool yellow liquor into old earthen jugs. Old Tatum and young Tatum drank it.

"Young Tatum is coming along," said all the neighbors. "Last Tuesday he bagged seven squirrels, and a week come Saturday two revenueurs."

One day old Tatum came home from the woods a broken man. He slumped

down wearily into the one chair of the Tatum mansion. He buried his head in his hands. Little Sophronia Tatum, injured, as are the children of the mountains, to the sight of tragedy and overwhelming grief, asked no questions, but silently brought an earthen jug. Little Saphiria followed close after her sister; little Susanna after her. There was no sound save the sound of those three jugs being emptied with the rush of a tumbling cascade.

Old lady Tatum bided her time. When he got ready her spouse would speak, and if he wouldn't, he wouldn't. "It's the boy," said old Tatum at last.

His wife twisted her skirts. A bleak look of misery came into her face. She drew out a corncob pipe and nervously filled it. The fingers which picked the coal from the fireplace were all unsteady.

"Dead?" she asked.

"Worser'n that," said old man Tatum.

"Married?" the anxious voice quivered.

"Worser'n that."

"Signed the pledge?" Her maternal voice was wrung with anguish.

"Worser'n that," said old man Tatum inexorably.

"Has he gone and murdered the Governor of the State, or p'isened somebody's cow, or bought some store shoes, or shook hands with a nigger?" she cried in terror.

"Worser'n that," said old man Tatum heavily again. His head fell down once more in his hands. Great sobs shook him. Little Sophronia came once again, little Saphiria, little Susanna. "He's disgraced us," said old man Tatum, when he had found voice. "Disgraced the honorable name of the Tatum."

Old lady Tatum was astounded. She did not know that the Tatums could be disgraced. She sucked heavily at her pipe. Not taking aim, with the inborn marksmanship of the mountaineer she spat into the fireplace and quenched the single coal. It died with a sizzling noise, like the wailing of a woman.

"He's gone and voted Republican," said old man Tatum.

Again he buried his head. Old lady

Tatum shrieked. Little Sophronia, Sapphira, Susanna, dropped their earthen jugs. There was a clap of thunder in the hills. A hound dog outside began to moan.

With a look of the stern Roman in his face old man Tatum rose, strode heavily to the fireplace, took down his gun. The four female Tatums watched him go out the door with stoic faces. They did not shriek when they heard a shot.

## Ageless Woman

BY EDGAR SAVAGE

Love, when the world and you and I were young,  
 And you were Eve, and I was by your side,  
 And Eden's vines and branches fashioned tongue  
 To sing the nuptial night of Adam's bride,  
 In the sweet tumult of our primal bliss  
 Little we recked of circumstance and blame;  
 Nor when upon the scarlet Nile your kiss  
 Transfigured me, your Antony, with flame.  
 Have we not died a thousand wistful deaths  
 Valiantly, down the bitter centuries,  
 Asking no favor than our mingled breaths,  
 Guenevere, Helen, Lilith, Heloise!  
 And if the world, this night, to dust shall turn,  
 Still shall our atoms strive, and merge, and burn.

## Reviews of Books

### THE FAITH OF UNBELIEF

NIELS LYNNE, BY J. P. JACOBSEN.

*Translated from the Danish by Hanna Astrup  
Larson.*

*(The American-Scandinavian Foundation,  
New York.)*

VERY different from the glow and and color and warmth, the vigorous trampling life of Marie Grubbe, is this second and last novel of the great Dane, Jens Peter Jacobsen. Here the rosy firmness of flesh, that you may almost caress in the first book, gives way to a transparent pallor. No matter with what bright colors the portrait is outlined, after a few pages the change imperceptibly takes place. You are aware of the person depicted but only as you might be aware of an absent friend. There is no contact established, no swift contagion of the senses. And this impression of spiritual life continues after the actual deaths of characters have been recorded. The unsatisfied ghosts seem to hover afar off as though they had been loosed in air—a dense and bluish air through which snow has lately fallen . . . and they have the seeming stillness of fly-wheels that revolve in whirring motion. This illusion is not created or sustained through the memories of living characters, for whom their dead, after the first burst of grief, seem to pass into oblivion. It seems as though the author, himself wan with approaching death, had assembled their spirits with his gentle spirit hands that had lost their power to conjure the exultant flesh.

Ibsen's last play, "When We Dead Awaken," gives me the same sense of

spiritual essence dominating the flesh, as well as something of the same somber finality and desecration of hope.

Neils Lynne, according to Miss Larson's sympathetic introduction is "the book in which Jacobsen relates his own spiritual struggles."

Niels is the son of a mother in whom the hunger for beauty waxes like a disease. Gifted but inarticulate, having no medium with which to express herself, she lies in the dull casing of her years, trembling with unheard vibrations like a stringless violin. When shortly before her death her son brings her to those lands whose colors and gardens and marble gods she has craved so long, there is no emotion of recognition. Her dream world is shattered by the real. Her wasted senses can no longer nourish themselves on the beauty that can be heard and felt and seen. She is drugged with dreams. Only the hunger in her spirit is like a cancer lustily alive.

From this mother Niels receives his lonely heritage. He too lives in dreams and his soul is a flower that grows inward, striking fangs of aborted color at its own core. When he is twelve the accidental sight of his young and beautiful aunt's milkwhite feet wake in him the first agitation of sensuous emotion. This interlude of Edele sounds the note to be so insistently repeated. From the first moment we see her she is doomed—a waxen faintly-smiling death luring with ankle chains of coral and shroud shot with reddish gold. Niels at her death-bed prays frantically to an answering God and when she dies his

child-faith goes with her; "When the parson spoke of the Lord he spurned the earth of the grave with his foot." Always his judgements are final, irrevocable, but he lacks the primal force to assert them or impose the sentence of his spirit on any but himself. This is shown in boyhood when he and his friend Frithjof wind their bobbin of dreams together. When Eric breaks in upon the spell, Eric whose bold eyes disavow any light they cannot vision, the two discontinue the long story they have been telling each other, and push back their dreams into obscure corners of their souls.

Eric becomes a painter who paints always the same woman, narrow-limbed, slender as a ray poised above him—a single ray reaching down through the one crevice in his lusty being. With Eric the author never becomes really intimate. Those first clear lines of boyhood are never quite filled in. Gradually he blurs into a bulky shadow and we feel his death as the blowing out of a match in the smoke of a debauch. Yet he is close-knit to the earth, a thing of flesh in all this flux of spirit—flesh that has already become as hearsay to his creator. None of these figures stand out, as in Marie Grubbe, silhouetted as against a sunset sky. They move somberly, tone on gray tone, with here and there a burning spot of gold.

There is no rapport between Niels Lynne and life. No matter how pure his dreams or how beautiful the thing he wills the result of action is inevitably disastrous or grotesque.

When he unselfishly hastens to help Eric regain mastery of his all too slender creative gift, the result is a liaison between himself and his friend's wife. But there is none of the warm sweet-

ness that Jacobsen knows so well how to put into love. Niels' and Fennimore's spirits do not meet. Only their flesh horribly conspires. There is the cold sadism of an angry monk in the author's treatment of this episode. Fennimore is drawn broadly in few but sure strokes. The slave-type shows in the innate sense of inferiority that made her love for Eric a grovelling abandon that wearied and revolted his. She cringes even in revolt when the women she is cries out impotently against its rival of the man's ideal. On the night of Eric's death when she stands in the snow waiting for Niels, her thoughts, that dart at him across the ice-bound fjord, chase each other like angry cats. And in the coarse abuse she hurls at her lover is all the fury of the slave that has been lured into betraying her rightful master.

So one by one they all leave him; Edele, his mother; Tema, Fennimore, his beloved child-wife—dying with eyes a little cool and aloof, concerned only with placating her offended God—last of all his child. He is the tenuous and enduring thread on which the salty pearls of his loves are broken or fall away. At last he is alone, with the dreams that were his only realities, ageing and barren in his breast.

Niels Lynne is only intellectually a pagan. He has nothing in him of the pagan joy of life. Emotionally, he is essentially religious and idolatrous of ideals. He must needs make a faith of unfaith. After the prayer torn out of his heart by the anguish on the face of his dying child, his heart turns on itself, heavy and cold as a stone for its betrayal of his no-God.

After all, he is tolerant, even tender toward another's belief, asking no toll



for his coldly reasoned divinity. (It is only the god who plays with white fiery fingers on hot strings of life for whose glory we are willing to pour blood smoking upon altars.) And it is this pride of unbelief that sustains him at the last, when alone save for the chilly company of his dreams, he dies "the difficult death."

But it is curious that this impression of vital spiritual life should fill a book by an avowed atheist who died as did his hero, Niels Lynne, with undaunted soul fronting the certainty of eternal extinction.

LOLA RIDGE.

### MISS LULU BETT

BY ZONA GALE

(Appleton, 1920.)

IT would be interesting to trace the origin and development of the critical legend about "Miss Lulu Bett." That such a book could have been solemnly and sincerely acclaimed as a sound artistic production by practically every critic in America, is one of the mysteries (there have been many such) of American literature. From the *Atlantic Monthly*, which announced that the book was without a flaw, to the *Dial*, which declares that it is a work of "unquestionable literary distinction," the chorus of praise has not been marred by a single dubious discord. It would be interesting to discover who first started this flurry.

But perhaps there is no individual culprit. It happens now and then that the critics of the country are swept off their feet by a tidal wave of mass psychology. At such times they almost completely lose their wits. At such times they are likely to say anything.

There can be no doubt that the fall of 1920 was the exquisite hour for "small-town" literature. Edgar Lee Masters, Willa Cather and Sherwood Anderson, by their really powerful pioneering in mid-American fields, had made the way easy and the audience large for new arrivals. It required a short time for the importance of "Spoon River" and "My Antonia" and "Winesburg" to become generally recognized. Once the real significance of these books had soaked in, however, it was inevitable that the next small-town story should be hailed with a salute of all guns. The critics, accordingly, almost without a dissenting voice, hailed "Miss Lulu Bett" as a novel "of distinction." Most of them, indeed, announced solemnly that it was a "contribution," as the jargon goes, "to our permanent literature."

If it were not for this strange stampede among the critics, one would feel that no mention of "Miss Lulu Bett" was necessary. But the book has been too widely hymned for any journal dealing with literature to ignore.

The facts are these: Considered as literature, permanent or ephemeral, "Miss Lulu Bett" is a bubble blown up with air. The book is almost unbelievably slight: there is next to *nothing* in it. The plot is bizarre and tenuous. None of the characters (not excepting Lulu herself) has any vitality: they are manikins. Not even Dwight Deacon, though his speech has apparently been copied verbatim from life and thus sounds constantly like an echo from reality, seems alive. The style of the book is as strained and as painful in its way as the speech of this gently humorous Dwight, Lulu's brother-in-law, whom in part it ridicules. The novel is distressingly empty. Its one merit is in

the realistic passages of conversation which smack strongly of the reportorial note-book.

Certainly a work of art in literature should strike the reader with a solid impact. It should leave him with a definite impression though that impression be a definite impression of vagueness. "Miss Lulu Bett" leaves no artistic impression. One's memory of the book is of a bizarre and tenuous plot, unvitalized characters speaking strange echoes of reality, an irritating style, one which, as Edwin Muir would say, is constantly "smirking," and a very dim and elusive afterglow.

One can hardly believe that the author of "Miss Lulu Bett" wrote the book seriously. It may have been intended seriously as propaganda for the release of women held in subjection by the "duty-complex," as Miss Gale herself has admitted. But one can hardly believe it was intended seriously as art. Fannie Hurst is a better "artist," right now, in this type of work. And there have been half a hundred American novels published in the last twenty years that are superior to "Miss Lulu Bett." I am tempted to say, a hundred.

J. M.

## THE AGE OF INNOCENCE

BY EDITH WHARTON

(Appleton)

Thanks to Mrs. Wharton we have now an accurate picture of New York society during the Eighteen-Seventies. Society with a large S. Without her usual charm of manner, but with an admirable diligence and indubitable knowledge of her subject, she has reconstructed for us that period of "faint implications and pale delicacies."

It is a rather deliberate work of art—polished, chilly, unresponsive, reserved, like the society which it pictures. A society archaic in its simplicities, with time heavy upon its hands. Urbane gentlemen, in grey frock coats and tall hats, who spent their lives caring for inherited fortunes and being coddled by their wives. They thought much of their ancestors and talked long and often of the dignity of the family. Thoroughly "nice" women who took their pallid pleasures seriously. They kept their houses; humored their husbands; paid formal calls; and had twelve dozen of everything, hand-embroidered, in their trousseaux. They, also, remembered their ancestors. Lives given over to the avoidance of originality and unpleasantness; whole families consecrated to the task of preserving the existing conventions. Horse-cars and archery and the sport of recognizing last seasons' gowns on the opening night of the opera!

Society, satisfied and supercilious, with little information and less thought. A great frigidarium—where one shivered slightly, yawned, and worshipped Family and Good Form.

Newland Archer is a member of one of New York's "first families," and, because of his environment, just misses being a very interesting man.

The two granddaughters of the Social Dictator, irascible, amusing, clever, old Catherine Mingott, are in love with him. One of them, May Welland, is young, rich, pretty, naive, typically New York, with a fund of common sense and a quiet determination. The other, Countess Ellen Olenska, is not so young, not rich, not quite so pretty, not at all naive, and has no common sense and much charm. Lovely, lonely, and disillusioned, Ellen

has committed the irremissible sin of being 'different.'

The story interest centers about this love affair. And, as a *story* the book is tedious, attenuated. Its real interest lies in its authoritative picture of the modes and morals of that narrow-

minded period. Its value to the social historian is immense.

But those of us who remember the Mrs. Wharton of *Madame de Treymes*, *Ethan Frome*, and *The Custom of the Country*, are disappointed.

Alice Sessums Leovy

## Odors

BY SCROODGE

I knew a man, once, who had lost his sense of smell. I told him, at the time, that I envied him. He said: "My friend, I would give ten years of my life to be able to nose the aroma of steak and onions." Suddenly, it occurred to me how many delicate, exquisite, lively, riant and robust perceptions come by way of the olfactory intake—such as the odor of fresh paint and lumber; new magazines; old books; musty tapestries; burnt grass and most smoky smells; incense and spices; some women's hair; divers dried leaves; one or two fruits; cow manure; certain cheeses; several forms of glue; resin; ripe olives; green corn; cantaloupes; tang of the sea; scent of dawn and dusk; fountains, springs, and the unfamiliar flowers; my brand of tooth-paste; a sort of perfume *Fleurette* uses; bakeries, confectionaries, delicatessen shops; the ethery odor about hospitals; a whiff from a neighbor's kitchen, on the way home to dinner; various tobaccos; the fumes of all good liquor—alas!

## New York Letter

NEW York is near the bottom of its bag. Most of the good things of the season in music, art and literature have had their day and there is little left to keep "us" in town.

The middle western realists have carried off the honors in the literary field: "Poor White," "Main Street," "Zell," "Miss Lulu Bett" and "Moon Calf."

I imagine next season will bring us carloads (the Middle West always delivers things in carloads) of middle western small novels. But a good thing happens only once. The backwash comes after it, and if you keep your eyes open and your hands in your pockets you will see it coming. The first time it is a Robespierre; the second time a Robespierrot.

The dramatization of Lulu Bett is a grandiose performance, it left a lasting impression on your correspondent and left no doubt in his mind as to his lack of ability to write for the theatre.

The Société Anonyme has an interesting exhibition of so-called "wild painters" from Germany and France. Futurists and Dadaists. I found nothing wild about their infantilities. Grown up men attempting a return to childish naiveté; imitators of archaic methods and people who were as sophisticated then, as these men living to-day are to-day. There is one difference between the modern imitators of archaic art and the men who created that art, and that is: the men who created those artistic ex-

pressions thousands of years ago imitated no one, they gave direct expression to emotions born within themselves.

Alfred Stieglitz, the great photographer and art connoisseur gave a tremendous exhibition of original photographs last month. It revived the old question of the relation of the camera to art. The discussions, like an afterglow of the exhibit, are still raging in various magazines.

As I said at the beginning, everybody is getting ready to leave town or has left and most have gone or are going, to Europe.

The most interesting group going abroad are the Kreymborgs and Harold Loeb, who are about to start an international magazine of the arts to be published by Americans in Italy and to be distributed throughout Europe and America. An introduction and interchange between the artists of both continents with a view of bringing them into closer contact. No one group or ism will be emphasized to the exclusion of any other. There will be departments of prose, poetry, the drama and reproductions of painting, sculpture and music.

Others to leave soon are Mr. Thayer, editor of *The Dial*, in search of manuscript for his magazine. Manuscripts of a quality not to be found this side of the ocean. Paul Rosenfeld, Sherwood Anderson and Waldo Frank, too, will soon leave these shores.



Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap, editors of *The Little Review*, were fined fifty dollars for publishing an installment of James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, in the last number of their maga-

zine. They paid the fine and are publishing another installment of the same novel in the next issue. We are looking for exciting fireworks.

LUPU DE BRAILA.

## La Menken

The conceit below, generally supposed to have been written in the Album of Adah Menken by Swinburne, is in reality a piracy tacked on to the poet by a certain R. H. Sheperd, who filched it from a Christmas Annual, "Walnuts and Wine," edited by A. M. Moore in 1882.

The March issue of *Alf's Well*, edited by Charles J. Finger, a continuation of *Reedy's Mirror*, contains an interesting sketch of Adah Menken by Cecil de Vere Stackpoole, in which the author states that "Swinburne wrote for her his verses *Dolorida*." Mr. Finger and Mr. Stackpoole please note.

Adah Isaacs Menken, christened Dolores Adios Fuertes, an erstwhile "light o'love," was born in New Orleans in 1835. Running the gamut from burlesque to the sublime, her most famous characterization remained the title role in Byron's *Maseppa*. While acting in London and Paris she "enjoyed" the intimacy of Dickens, Swinburne, the elder Dumas, Gautier, and others. Dickens is further said to have edited her second volume of verses *In/sic/sic*, which is dedicated to him.

After a record of four husbands, among them a musician, a professional prize-fighter, and a humorist ("Orpheus C. Kerr"), and divers "friends" of the Swinburne, Dumas variety, this remarkable woman died of "old age" at 33 years, in Paris, 1868. Her body lies in la Pere la Chaise, beneath the self-requested inscription "Thou Knowest."

## DOLORIDA

*Combien de temps, dis, la belle,  
Dis, veux-tu m'être fidèle?  
Pour une nuit, pour un jour,  
Mon amour.*

*L'Amour nous flatte et nous touche  
Du doigt, de l'oeil, de la bouche,  
Pour un jour, pour une nuit,  
Et s'enfuit.*

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### AND MARGINALIA

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## COLLEGE "EDUCATION."

WHEN I was at college there was a professor who used to heap scorn on the superior position that the athlete held above the student. "This place is getting more like a country club than a college" he would say. It needs no tremendous reflection to discover that his remark was not only the petulant protest of an official whose prestige is being dimmed by those higher up, but a judgment, complete and apt, of the American college of today. The American college of today has become in actuality more a country club than a place of learning, a country club with a few hours of recitation and lecture thrown in. Certain it is that the *esprit de corps* is social or athletic, anything save intellectual. Consider the contumely of "highbrow", the glamor of "athlete," the awe attached to: "Do you see that fellow sitting over there by the window? That's Brown, the all-American end for 1920."

The fault, of course, lies with the university—not especially the newer richly endowed Western and Middle-Western universities, but the old traditionals: Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Cornell. They have become schools for manners. So you can tell a Harvard man by his affected quasi-English accent, and general attitude of omniscience; a Yale man, by the cut of his clothes and his

immobile features, "who do a wilful stillness entertain with purpose to be dressed in an opinion of wisdom." It is probable that both are mimicking the English—and the more recent colleges are mimicking them. Underneath their manners you will find nothing but a few half-remembered facts from antiquated text-books. Beneath the front, nothing that differs from the cultural background of a barber or a plumber's assistant or a strike-breaker. Indeed, what an advantage there is lies with these latter, for their minds are not hermetically sealed with the official stamp of an academic degree.

The cause of the shallowness of our so-called "higher" education goes back to the slattern structure of American society. In England, as on the continent, the arts and humanities are for gentlemen and scholars. They are for men whose family wealth puts them beyond need of commercial striving, or men who have foresworn dollars and display in favor of study and research, who have chosen to live on a pittance for the pleasure of significant work, and the honor accorded them as their due. But in the United States no such condition obtains. In the consciousness of nearly every college boy lies the knowledge that some day he must go out into the world and "hustle," (ah, the beautiful word!) for a living. Of what use then



Latin and Greek, History and Calculus? None. Better for him to learn how to dress, observe the manners of the rich, pick the right friends, or become that superman, if he can, the college athlete-hero, and thus get a flying start into the business world. And let him not neglect those unions of success, the fraternities or societies. With the all-powerful pin he must be a sad bungler if he cannot "arrive" at the opulent purse and waist-coat.

And now, looking back on what I have written, I discover that I have made out a case, not for culture or education, but for the college as it is. For palpably the college puts the exact polish on a man that he needs in his business. It is true that he is a joke to the cultured European and to the minority of honestly educated men and women in the United States, but what of that? Who cares for the opinion of freaks and high-brows and damned foreigners? If colleges help to bring in the needful, they stand within an impregnable fortress.

Tomorrow some hard working self-made man may tell me with a gleam of pride in his eyes that his son is going to have the benefit of the college education he misses. Shall I warn him that he is throwing his money away? Not I, I'm too well acquainted with the fact that the college will give his son just the "polish," the social confidence, the "front" that is invaluable, because it makes him believe in his own tremendous superiority. But if I thought this estimable gentleman could see the point, I would like to register one slight cautioning note: Once with every comet comes one with a real appetite for knowledge, a true receptivity to culture.

Be sure your son is not one of these *queer* ones. For a modicum of learning endows these with neither poise nor power, but with a very exact estimate of their real unimportance and ignorance. Take care, for by whimsey of the chromosomes such a freak may occur in even your respectable family.

♦ ♦

## AMERICAN LITERATURE

There is a school of literary thinkers who predict that the ultimate flowering of American literature will be distinctively flavored with a tincture of the soil, that it will be definitely recognizable as American, particularly in subject-matter. They contend that until the national letters bear some vague physical stigmata of *Americanism*, they will remain inferior.

There is a fallacy in this conviction which is so widely held. Great literature is rarely national and rarely local in aroma. It is, in its nature, at once universal and individual. You can distinguish now and then the racial mood or the racial intellectual idiosyncrasies in the individual's work, but the racial expression is more often than not incidental or accidental. Certainly the interpretation of locality is quite accidental. The great literature of the world, as a matter of fact—except for subtle or abrupt differences in mood or habit of thought on the part of the writers—read very much alike.

Literature is an individual affair. The writer expresses himself. That which

is truly individual approaches the universal. It is very difficult to localize genius. Was that he-fairy Shelley an Englishman? Was Heinrich Heine a German? Voltaire and Anatole France are disembodied intelligences with a French habit of thought. If you will look into it, you will discover that good poetry in all languages reads very much the same, and good prose also. Literature is produced by individuals. And they do not produce necessarily their best work by reflecting their surroundings in space or their period in time. Shakespeare, Milton, Virgil, and Homer did not. Very few have succeeded in that business, and very few high intelligences have attempted it.

In American literature to date, how many good Americans do we find? Is there anything distinctively American or "United States" in the work of Poe, Emerson, Hawthorne, Bierce? That which is really enduring in the work of Whitman and Mark Twain—the two possible exceptions—is universal and scarcely localized at all. At present who would say there is anything definitely American in Edwin Arlington Robinson, Ezra Pound, James Branch Cabell? The best work of Sherwood Anderson and Willa Cather seems exotic—it, too, partakes of the eternal moods. Carl Sandburg? That which rings true in his work might have been transplanted from other tongues—it is universal in thought and feeling.

Your distinctively American literature is Walt Mason, Harold Bell Wright, Artemus Ward, Josh Billings, Eleanor Porter, "Main Street," "Miss Lulu Bett," the *American Magazine*, and "The Hesitation Blues."

### WANTED A HOTSPUR

"Success consists in a close appliance to the laws of the world and since these laws are intellectual and moral, an intellectual and moral obedience." "The secret of success lies in the same old word, drudgery." "Every success in life comes from sympathy and co-operation and love." "Success in life is a matter not so much of talent and opportunity as of concentration and perseverance." And so on, and so on—balderdash for the most part.

I prefer to believe with Disraeli that "Success is the child of audacity." All of the high flown, honeyed phrasings of our Emersons, our Sammy Smileses, our Henry Ward Beechers, our Dr. Frank Cranes, come to naught weighed against the simplicity of this statement. Here is the recipe, my friend: Dare, and you will succeed.

But how few of us dare dare. Timorous souls, cabined by cowardice, we trudge on in the rut, we dig with our own hands, mud behind, beneath, before, mud ourselves. Dull, deaf, purblind, senseless to the reaches above, we plod along. One sniff for your Hotspur is enough. Give him one sniff of high adventure and we may wallow in mud to our heart's content.

The wail goes up of lack of opportunity, heritage, luck. This cry obtains for cattle alone. Hotspur wants not for opportunities, he makes them. A hackneyed reminder, but one that cannot be overstated. Your man of vision and courage knows but one master, his own instinct. When Napoleon felt the need of a war to exercise and demonstrate

his genius he did not sit down and wait for the war to happen, he went out and made one.

*Homo minimus* digs his hole and lies in it. Visionary Hotspur builds his castles only to topple them over. The gulf between *homo minimus* and Hotspur lies in the fact that the first burrows a comfortable hiding place, wherein he sneaks safe from a world he dare not glimpse nor grasp, whereas the second fashions a world to his own liking, taries there a space, tears it down, rebuilds again, destroys, rebuilds, moving always up and up until gloriously discontent, reaching, grasping, reaching, he wins at length to a world beyond worlds, which is not of this world.

Not ever in our planet's history have the Hotspurs of humanity been more needed than at present. This is indeed an hour of ponderous marionettes, mechanical dunces. Charlatanism, chicanery, Teratology, anything is preferable to the tiresome mediocrity of the moment.

"God give us men"—you know the verses of old Holland—men who dream, men who dare—the difficult, the preposterous, the audacious. Carlyle with his stock Scotch intellect takes it all too seriously. Your Hotspur, your successful man is not so much a child of God or fortune as he is a child of perversity or daring. The mountebank and the demi-god are synonymous, as are the genius and the madman. A certain technique, conscious, curious, unabashed, incredible to the run of humanity, is the trick. There are, I venture, still among us a few, who by canny observation and singular cunning coupled with

sheer nerve, will contrive this trick in the ultimate. I submit that these neoterics be somehow or other corralled, examined and encouraged in the furtherance of their fantastic whims. That, say, a course in *Espéglerie* be introduced into the curriculum of our larger universities where they will be coached, by whom, heaven only knows, in the slippery art and technique of mundane success. We must have men—quaint, absurd, egoistic men—men of the ancient character—droll, moonstruck, eccentric chaps. It matters not how we get them, but we must get them, men of audacity, daring, preposterous men.

Things have, indeed, come to a lamentable pass. Take inventory, whom have or had we, during the last stirring years—one Theodore Roosevelt, the "late" D'Annunzio, Nicolai Lenine and Charles Chaplin. It is pitiable, my friend, is it not? What has become of the hardy, high hearted breed of yesterday? Have we no potential Hectors in our midst? Is the old blood turned to water? Is man becoming no more than an efficient automaton, or is our man of tomorrow to be a woman? Wanted: A Hotspur!

#### A BURNING QUESTION.

A vast flow of conversation, editorial comment, and theocratic warning reaches one's ears regarding the feminine smoker. One faction proclaims her to be indecorous, "common." The



other champions her rights, her independence. Curiously, the debate is not between the old generation and the new. To the contrary, in this "momentous" question the fossils find supporters among the young bloods, and many of the straight-laced, reared in the Grundy school, see themselves reacting to the dare-deviltry of the newcomers. This discussion grows more and more heated until it becomes apparent that a conclusion must be reached, possibly some law enacted, with penalties for the offender.

Mrs. Blank, a voter, returns from an afternoon at bridge and endeavors to stun her husband with the news that her hostess had served, not alone food and drink, but *cigarettes*. The mother of Mrs. Blank, typical of the era, remarks after a similar function that *her* hostess had not. Blank, breadwinner, is unmoved by the controversy, until John Blank III, a youthful gallant, calls his father's attention to certain talk in circulation concerning Sister Blank, who is smoking "in public." Whereupon, the old man storms about and thunders time worn phrases for thirty-five minutes.

Miss Blank, a maiden aunt, late of

Vermont, puffs a meerschaum in divers places in and about Washington Square. Her antecedents, rooted in the Green Mountains, get wind of it somehow, and for a while there is the devil to pay.

Worst of all, perhaps, is the case of Doris Blank, just turned six, discovered by her mother, playing "ladies" with a blue-eyed doll, the while inhaling gold-tipped fags over the tea-cups.

And so on, until it becomes imperative that something must be done. Our humble suggestion for a solution is: Let them smoke, the whole lot of them. In so doing they are quite naturally following the lead of the *haut monde*; if such a course calls for censure, there might well be pointed out the existence of numerous other eccentricities relative to fashion worship far more dangerous to propriety, even health, than merely sucking the weed.

Our word to the ladies is: Carry on! Keep your weather eye on the "smart" set. If some day they decree chewing plug, or declare ostrich quill toothpicks to be *au fait*, your aping them is not likely to make you a ridiculous figure, at least.

For God's sake, give me the man who has brains enough to make a fool of himself.—Stevenson.



# The Curio Shop

BY PADRAIC COLUM

## THE FISH

Mould-colored, like the leaf long fallen from  
The Autumn tree, with drooping tails like  
roots,  
He rises now within the crystal sphere,  
A Fish that faces you!

Fishes should have no faces—  
No eyes in front that goggle like the lampe  
Magicians fill with oil from dead men ta'en,  
No mowing mouths that just so feebly make  
Destruction's sign!

And yet an artist made him,  
Moulding the obvious gold fish into this  
That rises now within the crystal sphere!  
Masks,  
Two-handled swords, curved tusks,  
The bust of Heliogabius are beside.

## PIGEONS ON A PALACE FLOOR

Odaliques, Odaliques,  
Treading the pavement  
With feet pomegranate-stained!  
When we'd less years,  
We bartered for, bought ye!  
Ah, then we knew ye,  
Odaliques, Odaliques,  
Treading the pavement  
With feet pomegranate-stained.

## THE MALAY KREESE

The kisses of women  
Are like the sea-water:  
Who tastes the more,  
Thirsts the more after!

The kisses of women  
Are like honey laid  
Where the press of the lips  
Meets the edge of the blade!

Thy lover is maddened:  
He rises, he goes;  
Nothing can slake him,  
But blood of his foes!

## ARCHAIC CRETAN PICTURE

O what a hound he holds!—as bronze topped  
spear  
It is as high! And what a horse he has—  
A horse that bends a neck like to a bride's!  
The hound's not yet a-strain—  
He dreams of chasing eagles in the wind!  
The horse's mane  
Is dizen'd into little candle flames;  
(The slim horse stands high behind)  
He holds the leash—O Youth will be away  
From Knossos and the Daedal Palaces!

# Wild Oats

BY VALMA CLARK

IT was on a spring day Friday afternoon, after twenty sober years of teaching in the Honeyville High School, that some final long resisting nerve in Mattie Belle Green's delicate mechanism snapped like a too tautly stretched elastic, and Mattie Belle flung herself to the sowing of a crop of week-end wild oats. The chalk dust, the odor of stale oranges lingering in the air, the rank fumes of peanuts, which followed that suspicious crackling report from Dan Stanton's corner, all these things she could have borne, in spite of a heat emphasized by the buzzing of a blue bottle on the windowpane. Lila McLane's carelessly contemptuous allusion to Miss Green which she overheard as she stood sentinel duty during the passing classes, was the thing that finished her. However . . .

Your fire-horse doubtless has his dreams of soft, early fields of sweet clover and grass, remote from the hard asphalt of the city street; while your old farm horse, who may have inherited fighting blood from some great great-grandfather charger, has his dreams of galloping off to battle. Such is the restlessness in horses—and in men!

Certainly, in all the thirty-eight years of her irreproachable life, Mattie Belle Green had given no outward indications of a passion for adventure—with, possibly, a single exception. Once in her rather mid-Victorian girlhood, she had run away to be a gypsy, had camped for

half a day at the foot of the Big Lane a quarter of a mile from the farmhouse, had boiled eggs in a tin can for dinner, and had returned in the afternoon to continue sewing patchwork quilts and painting roses on black velvet. Romance had, of course, passed her by. She had always been colorless, a little too thin, and a little too lady-like. With the years, she had grown purer and finer grained than ever, a sort of delicate maiden-lily.

There were hints of a spark within her that resisted spinsterhood. She subscribed to "The Ladies' Home Journal" and "The House Beautiful." On Saturday nights, she put up her hair in curlers for the sake of a Sunday morning wave. She had once appeared in the schoolroom in a sporting waist of green plaid; but the girls had tittered and the cleverest boy had spoken her name, "Miss Green," unnecessarily and emphatically, and she had quivered sensitively at sight of the waist ever after. Finally, Mattie Belle had been known to go to the corner Greek store *after supper* for a sundae, and to drop a nickel into the music box. Yes, somewhere beneath the accumulated silt deposit of the years, there was a thin stratum of romanticism in Mattie Belle Green.

She had passed all but the last milestone in the road of a teacher. The yearly, fifty dollar raises were things of the past; long ago, she'd reached her maximum salary. Sabbatical years had

come and gone with Mattie Belle too poor to improve her mind further on half pay. The high honor mark of school preceptress, she'd long since achieved, and found honor swamped under the duty of keeping the school register. There was only the life pension left to anticipate, if she could travel thirty more years along the road. Already as much a part of the village scenery as the old tollbridge with its abandoned tollhouse, or as the ancient Tom Dillon, official hunter of village polecats, followed by his terrier and an assortment of small boys, it seemed probable that Mattie Belle Green would be teaching in the Honeyville High School, and calling at the post office twice a day for her book-agent letters thirty years hence.

And then, on that Friday afternoon, Lila McLane, who was pretty and popular, spoke her name, "Miss Green," to the youth beside her and shrugged "School-teacher!" with a wry little air of dismissal. Now, to designate the veriest schoolma'am as "school-teacher" in that tone of voice is as calling a German "plg." No term is more cutting.

Mattie Belle was less "catty" than most women. She did not call Lila from the line and order her to remain after school for talking. Instead, she turned back to her own empty room and stared at the bough of pink frosted apple blossoms brushing the window pane, with a dazed look, pink stinging her white face as though she had been slapped on both cheeks. Then chalk dust choked her and the mingled odor of orange peel and peanuts nauseated her, so that she stepped across the room, flung the win-

dow wide open, and leaned out until the apple blossoms kissed her face.

Down there below, at the foot of the sharp hill, the rectangle of the little red station house, set at the end of the dust-yellowed road, rimmed by a grassless, dust-yellowed area, lay like a scarlet fever placard in the sleepy, sun bathed valley—a vivid danger signal that said, "Don't!" A black topped buggy smoked its leisurely way downward along the dusty road, and someone stepped out from the door of the station house. The four o'clock train, was Mattie Belle's mechanical thought, as she noted the signs of life.

Suddenly her blue-veined hand clutched the window sill, she leaned a shade further toward the valley, and took a breath. The smell of apple blossoms tingled deeply through her as a sip of rare, heady wine quickens the blood of a person who has never known intoxicants.

Then the flat jangle of the class bell fingered all the over tired nerves in her body into one protesting discord. She came back to the sudden silence of the building and knew that they were sitting there in the study-hall, all of them, waiting for her to take the roll call and dismiss them. For a moment, she hesitated. Then, with a deliberate movement, she turned, ruthlessly broke a spray of blossoms from the forbidden apple tree, and slipped, like a shadow, through the hall and out of the building.

In her own room, in Mrs. Peters' boarding house opposite the school, she moved swiftly. She gathered some things into her little black hand bag.

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

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She pried up the gilt-headed thumb tack at the corner of the carpet under the bed, took from beneath the carpet the which she kept hidden there for emergency use, and folded them into pocket-book. She put on her pansy covered Sunday hat and the blue serge jacket that matched her skirt. And she stopped a final moment before the mirror to tuck the spray of apple blossoms into her belt.

"I am going to the city. I shall probably be back Sunday evening," she explained, on her way to the door, to Mrs. Peters, who had appeared from kitchen regions. Even in her haste, the habit of precise English kept her from clipping sentences to phrases.

A little breathless, Mattie Belle took the one remaining seat in the crowded day-coach just as the train joggled forward. She sat back, and frowned slightly at her dusty shoes. Then, in a sudden panic, she missed her pocket-book, reassuringly found it, and clutched it tightly. Finally, it became immediately necessary to her to get her hand bag onto that rack above; she stretched, found herself too short and her arms trembly, tried again.

"Here, let me," offered the young man who occupied half of her seat.

"Thank you very much," she responded.

With business details at length attended to, once the conductor had relieved her of her ticket, Mattie Belle looked about her. She wanted badly to gaze out of the window, but was afraid the young man would think she was staring at him. So she watched the woman with the baby across the aisle, and reflected upon the faulty discipline

of mothers in general. She wondered who had taken the roll, and what they'd thought about her, and whether they'd found the register—she'd left it in the top left drawer of her desk. Then she wondered what she'd do when she reached the city, where she'd go. It was rash of her! The apple blossoms were drooping; she took the spray from her belt and regarded it with the fretted line in her forehead.

"It's a shame," sympathized the young man beside her in the most natural way. "I say, I'll get you some water." Before she could protest, he had squeezed past her, and was back again with a ridiculous cardboard drinking cup spilling water. She watched his attempts to keep the spray of blossoms from tipping the cup, which he placed on the window ledge.

"Bonehead!" he remarked cheerfully. "That's me every time, biting into something no human could chew! Sprig's all right—cup's all right—it's the combination that won't go. Isn't that always the way, now?" he chuckled. "Either your cup's too big and the modest violet slips in and gets drowned, or your flower's too big and the whole thing topples over. Put me in Scottsville and I'm top-heavy; put me in New York and I sink." He pondered it. "Your little jazz man in church—gets lost in eternity. Well—never you mind! I'll fix it." He departed again with cup and flowers.

"Conductor recommends washbasin," he announced casually, when he returned. "You move over."

Mattie Belle obeyed. She wondered whether this extraordinary man had guessed that traveling was such a novel



experience to her that she still retained a childish preference for the seat by the window. With certain mental reservations, she found herself, strangely enough, liking the young man. She warmed to his little attentions; moreover, if a strange gentleman must talk to her, she could at least approve of the impersonal nature of this gentleman's conversation.

"Cheerful old lady sat here before you," he began at once. "Got off at your town. What was it?"

"Honeyville," she replied.

"Yes, Honeyville. 'She'd had an operation once. Had an eccentric little mannerism of turning her hat around on her head, like a wheel on an axle—absent minded, you know—as though she hoped sometime to find a comfortable angle. Straw hat with a feathery flub-dub, it was."

"That was Hettie Bamburger," Mattie Belle informed him. "She does that in church," she added rather sadly.

"Church now!" he switched amazingly. "I keep away. Hate to be caught praying. Most fellows do. Women like it. It's no satisfaction to a woman to pray by herself; she wants her neighbors to see; it gives her a virtuous feeling, and anyhow, she knows she looks most touching in a prayerful attitude. Right, am I?" He smiled down at her with a whimsical lift of the left corner of his mouth.

Mattie Belle felt that she ought to be shocked, but she answered him seriously: "I have never minded bowing my head," she replied, "but kneeling always seems so—undignified."

He threw back his head and roared. "There, you see I am right," he tri-

umphed; "you think of appearances." She did not quite see, but she said nothing.

"*My* church is going to be a little inn," he announced, suddenly serious. "Cheer and rest; all the sermons and prayers wordless. There's a poem—" With his eyes upon the sheep, that looked like propped-up stones against the distant hillside, he recalled it:

"I'll keep a little tavern  
Below the high hill's crest,  
Wherein all gray-eyed people  
May sit them down and rest.

"There shall be plates a-plenty  
And mugs to melt the chill  
Of all the gray-eyed people  
Who happen up the hill."

Only I'll take 'em all in," he broke off, "gray-eyed, black-eyed, blue-eyed—all the folks. More moonshine!" he shrugged with the left-cornered smile for himself. "Top-heavy, this time!"

Mattie Belle's mind was nimble from twenty-odd years of mental gymnastics, with exercises ranging from English Literature to Solid Geometry, but she had never heard anyone talk like this before.

"About yourself?" he questioned, slipping easily to the personal basis. "You talk."

A little crust of ice formed above Mattie Belle's reluctant liking for the young man, and without replying, she gazed pointedly out of the window.

He appraised her with a swift glance that was at once keen and amused. "I'm Grant Barbour," he continued, coasting blithely over the thin ice of her disapproval. "My last job was in New York, on a little monthly magazine. We

started it, another chap and I, but it never rightly materialized. Good idea too. A couple of waves ahead of its time, that was the trouble. Advanced conservatism was our platform, and folks are still back on radicalism. Well—"he dismissed it. "Now I'm bound for the West—engineering job this time. Looking for something midway between an ocean and a cup—wash-basin size, or a little larger."

He smiled straight into Mattie Belle's face, with his eyes this time, and she smiled back, tremulously at first, then recklessly. She could no more have withstood the charm of the strange young man's smile than she could have resisted the wild lure of the little red station house an hour before. She had no way of knowing that Grant Barbour was a water color artist in life, who delighted to daub warm mixed colors onto ascetic, pencil scratched, white sheets. But she felt sun-warmed inside, and she told what there was to tell about herself. It is like looking down at the water, trying to summon courage to dive; once you do flop off, you'll dive again and again, a little deeper each time. Mattie Belle, having flopped, found that she liked to talk about herself, and poured out her heart to the young man. She even told him how Lila McLane's remark had been the last straw. "And so I ran away," she finished with a twitchy smile. "It was very foolish to do that without making plans. I think I shall go to the Young Women's Christian Association."

"Ran away for good!" he sympathized.

"No, O no! I shall go back Sunday night," she quickly reassured him, "in

time for Monday morning classes, you know. I intended to spend a week-end in the city anyhow," she added, by way of justifying herself.

Grant Barbour considered her without smiling, as she sat with her hands clasped, schoolroom fashion, in her lap. "Saturday and Sunday," he ruminated. "I'm stopping off there for a couple of days myself," he added thoughtfully. "I say, we'll do the sights together!"

Mattie Belle's hand fluttered to her throat. "O, I—but it would scarcely be proper, would it?"

"Bosh! *Fences* again! I can't endure 'em, make a point of tearing 'em down, always," he asserted vigorously. "It's all right. You'll see. We'll have a rip-snorting time. Theatre tonight and the next night; dinners and art galleries; yes, and church, and even a sight-seeing car—tallest building and that sort of thing," he conceded reassuringly. "And now your name?" he prompted in matter-of-fact tones that rendered protests out of order. "I'll have to call you something."

"My name is"—she moistened her lips—"Mary Morison." She gave the long a to Mary and lingered over the name as though she loved it. She had not intended to deceive him, but she simply could not bring herself to say her own harsh name, and Mary Morison was, of all names, the loveliest one she knew.

"After the lady of the poem, eh?" he observed quizzically. "Well, from now on you're Mary and I'm Grant. Say it."

"Grant," she repeated faintly.

"Right-o! We're almost in. I'll get you located at the Y. W. and give you an hour to be ready for dinner," he plan-

ned gaily. "We're dining at the Statler. Will you have roses or violets?"

Mattie Belle felt a breeze at the nape of her neck and turned her head to find Miss Salley Holcomb, the village seamstress, leaning her way.

Miss Holcomb here, behind her, all this time! On her way to the married sister's place in the city for the annual visit, reason told her. She'd heard every word, Mattie Belle knew hopelessly, as she followed the young man and her bag from the train.

She caught Grant Barbour's sleeve to stop him. "That was Miss Holcomb in back of us," she said. "I don't think I'd better—she's watching now."

"That's right. Just you hang onto me," he advised, as he swept her along. "If we can find a taxi—Holcomb, you say?"

"From Honeyville," panted Mattie Belle

He grinned. "Let's give Miss Holcomb from Honeyville a run for her money," he observed, as he paused to draw her slack arm snugly through his.

"O, you don't know Honeyville," quavered Mattie Belle.

But Honeyville and Miss Holcomb, all things past and yet to come, were blurred by the concentrated wonder of that evening. Amid lights and music and colors and people that moved past her like water flowing downstream through her fingers, Mattie Belle anchored herself to Grant's face. He was her only hope now, the one person in the world that she knew. She tasted what he ordered, only admitting a preference for chocolate ice cream, "plain." "Two chocolate creams, straight," he ordered with a twinkle.

"Yessur," agreed the waiter, twinkling back.

"They are—carmined!" she murmured once, as she studied the vivid faces of the women at an adjoining table.

He laughed at the quaintly curious word. "You are—carmined too," he accused.

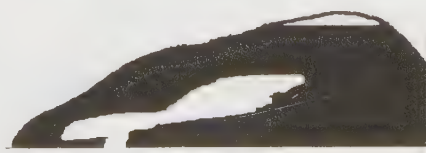
She touched her cheek with one finger. "It feels hot." Then, with a shyness that would have been pretty in a girl, she looked away from him.

At the theatre, later, she gazed above and beyond the bare back of the woman in front of her, finally stole a glance at her companion, and found him blandly unconscious of anything unusual. His acceptance of bare backs shocked her more than the bare backs themselves. From the rainbow dance, at the start, she rose to the musical comedy; a medley of colored lights and tinkly songs, it swept her back to story-book fairy-lands of her childhood. When the curtain dropped and she relaxed, she discovered that her handkerchief was twisted and torn.

Grant Barbour was as good as his word; art galleries, churches, plays, they did them all. In the room of modern artists, he stood for a long time before a small painting bearing a little placard, "August Moonlight," a slim boy swimming in a moonlit, green pool. "Jove, that's fine!" he exclaimed. "Reminds me of night! Ever swim in cool water under a moon?"

"I have never learned to swim," replied Mattie Belle in a low voice.

Between sights, he talked, ran on and on incessantly, covered, in vivid snatches, without effort, the conversational course of a lifetime, it seemed to Mattie Belle.





"I think I shall never marry," he said once. "You feel your power when you're paddling alone. Your canoe's almost alive in its sensitive responses—answers to the merest flick of the wrist. There's excitement in skimming along with the waves slapping against a high bow. A passenger steadies you, makes it safer—but less adventuresome."

"You might be—lonely, later," Mattie Belle pointed out delicately.

"Fear of loneliness is such a negative reason for marrying," he objected. "Weak, isn't it?"

"Yes," she agreed, unconvinced.

"Little bullion cubes of romance versus the simmering beef-stew of married life!" He laughed. "Rather neat, eh? Bullion cubes are piquant, compact—beef-stew's filling. Well—" he shrugged.

He spoke freely and enthusiastically of his morning "tub." In Honeyville, one did not speak of baths in "mixed company," even though the pipes froze in winter and one shovelled wash boilers full of snow to be melted over the kitchen range.

He watched her wistful response to pleasure. Over the luncheon table after she'd sat with closed eyes through a quavering violin solo, he spoke. "Too bad! And even now, you might come to take an almost pagan delight in just the things of life!" He inhaled cigarette smoke deeply. "To bite into a juicy apple and crunch it between your teeth—to walk barefooted on a moist beach and watch the sand ooze between your toes—to drink black coffee, turkish coffee with an alcoholic bite, and then to wrestle with an idea, throttle it

and beat it out—to touch smooth skin—I spent a year in a pine forest, once, just for the odor of the pine needles. Even the clean, peppermint tang of tooth paste, did you ever stop to enjoy that?"

"I have always disliked peppermint," she stammered.

"I've half a notion to take you with me," he smiled, "for lessons in living."

She managed an answering smile for his odd joke, and turned to her dessert.

"You mustn't eat ice cream," he suddenly objected; "just absorb it. Shave it off with the edge of your spoon, tantalize yourself, then feel the velvet smoothness of it on your tongue. See?"

"If I had time—" he said to himself. "But no, there's never time for more than—a salute."

"What books do you read?" he questioned, coming back to her.

With her finger tips, she gathered the stray crumbs into a little pile. "I am fond of 'Jane Austen,'" she replied.

"It's as I feared," he nodded gravely. "Don't! 'Jane Austen' is not for you. You must read the 'Brontës.'"

Arms folded on the table, he leaned toward her. "I know your life," he stated with the whimsical smile. "Break-fast: Half an orange, or prunes, poached egg on toast, coffee."

"Oatmeal in the winter," she supplied.

"Of course—oatmeal! Dinner at noon: 'Will you have coffee, tea, or milk?' Supper: again, 'Will you have coffee, tea, or milk?' Fishballs on Fridays. Bells for all things at regular intervals during the day. My dear, stop institutionalizing yourself before it's too late. I won't be responsible for you when



you're fifty, if you keep on. I wouldn't miss the experience of a rarebit nightmare."

"But I am nearly forty now," she offered. Her eyes, fixed on his face, were curious.

"I'm thirty," he answered, laughing. "But I'm fifty in experience to your ten. And I'm staying young while you're growing old. Just you break loose and try it!"

It was after church on Sunday, when they were in the park, that the lie bit into Mattie Belle's conscience and she confessed. "My name is not Mary Morison," she stated without looking at him.

He laughed at her. "I think that was the first lie you ever told. You were very inexperienced. Practice, Mary."

He had decided that she would wait for the late train back to Honeyville. "Good-byes are more artistic at night," he had pointed out. He swung her bag onto the train, and stood with her beside her car in the hollow din of the light-spangled train-shed, until the conductor called, "All aboard!" "Miss Mary Morison, you will remember me," he stated. He took her face in his two hands, stooped, and kissed her gently, as one kisses a little thin lady for whom one feels rather sorry. Mattie Belle was docile, yielding, suddenly, in the shadow, a wistful, pale-faced little girl. On swift impulse, he took her into his arms and kissed her a second time as a man might kiss the woman he loves—hurt her.

Mattie Belle was to learn afterward that Sophronia McLane, Lila's mother and president of the Ladies' Missionary Guild of Honeyville, witnessed that kiss. But she travelled home alone in a warm

daze that excluded Sophronia McLane. All she ever remembered about the two hour's ride was the way the moving cars were reflected on a dim bank beyond the window, like a procession of giant "choo-choo cars" trailed along by an unseen giant child.

Mrs. Peters, home from the Missionary Guild, tackled Mattie Belle the following afternoon with bland familiarity. "Enjoyed yourself in the city, dearie?" she opened fire.

"Yes," replied Mattie Belle.

"You'll be marryin' next, and leavin' us. Sophronia McLane told me, confidential, she saw you kissin' a man."

Mattie Belle clasped and unclasped her hands, but volunteered nothing.

"Engaged, are you, dearie?"

"No."

"A relation, mayhap?"

"No," breathed Mattie Belle, escaping not too soon to catch the cold glint in Mrs. Peters small eyes.

Sophronia McLane's "confidences" travelled. The whole village, every school boy, knew, by this time, that she had been kissed by a man. Mattie Belle sat in her room, sick with the shame of it, until habit drove her out to run the gamut of the crowded postoffice for the evening mail.

Pushed against the wall in the little outer office to wait her turn at the window, she felt herself stared at. Then gathering courage to look up, she suddenly realized a dawning interest in her, almost a new respect for her, on these familiar faces. In the eyes of the village, she—Mattie Belle Green—had had an "affair." She was a force to be reckoned with and gossiped about, a woman with a past.

Why, anyone of a dozen exciting things might happen to her. She might be asked to resign, as the little grade teacher who wore ribbons about her hair and went to dances, had been asked to resign. Mrs. Peters might order her to leave; people might refuse to take her in; she might even have to live at the "hotel," that home of travelling men and campdore. Mattie Belle held up her head, and her expression was not meek, as she went past them into the street.

As a matter of fact, Miss Green was not requested to hand in her resignation, nor was she driven to the street. She went serenely on her way, though folks did say that her teaching had fallen off and rumor had it that the number of failures in Solid Geometry that year was disgraceful.

There was a tiny sequel to Mattie Belle's romance. On a day in October, there came a letter "To the Little Teacher of English, Solid Geometry and Other Subjects, Honeyville High School"—a letter that bore a San Francisco post mark, and that was clearly not a form letter on text-books. "Looks like a personal for Miss Green," the postmistress announced to the outer office in general as she handed it over. A cluster of orange blossoms dropped, as Mattie Belle drew out the thin note paper, and Lila McLane handed it back to her and

held open the door for her to pass out with something like deference.

"Dear Mary Morison," the note read:

"You are still teaching. Am I right?

"The engineering job didn't materialize. I'm bound for a lotus land where men still drink wine. Mining this time. Wish me luck and a short life."

That was all,—no signature, no hint of an address.

Mattie Belle dozed a little over her geometry papers that evening. An odd person, he was; she tried to remember the things he'd said; her mind was a jumble of tooth paste, washbasins, bullion cubes. The dusky room with the gas lamp from the street shining in, merged into the train-shed; his arms were about her, hurting her . . . Mattie Belle shivered.

And speaking of horses, the meekest old farm drudge is capable of surprising you with a temperamental spurt,—often just as the last kick of the nearly plough-broken beast, before he subsides into spiritless old age. Perhaps, after all, that kick simply justifies a peaceful decline, proves to the old horse—for his own self-respect—an adventurous spirit, and gives him something to doze over in the oatless intervals.

A man never rises so high as when he knows not whither he is going.—  
*Cromwell.*

# The Passing of Tennyson\*

BY ERNEST DOWSON

As his own Arthur fared across the mere,  
With the grave Queen, past knowledge of the throng,  
Serene and calm, rebuking grief and tear,  
Departs this prince of song.

Whom the gods love, Death does not cleave nor smite,  
But like an angel, with soft trailing wing,  
He gathers them upon the hush of night,  
With voice and beckoning.

The moonlight falling on that august head,  
Smoothed out the mark of time's defiling hand,  
And hushed the voice of mourning round his bed—  
"He goes to his own land."

Beyond the ramparts of the world, where stray,  
The laurelled few o'er field Elysian,  
He joins his elders of the lyre and bay,  
Led by the Mantuan.

We mourn him not, but sigh with Bedivere,  
Not perished be the sword he bore so long,  
Excalibur, whom none is left to wear—  
His magic brand of song.

\*In our February issue we printed one stanza of the above poem in an article on Ernest Dowson. We have received so many inquiries about the poem in its entirety that we reprint it here in full. Its only appearance, to our knowledge, was in *T. P.'s Weekly* in 1915, under the able editorship of Mr. Holbrook Jackson. Thus far, it has not been included in any of the various collected works of this graceful poet.—EDITORS.

# Haldane Macfall, Novelist

BY VINCENT STARRETT

I SAY novelist, because, save to the intimate minority, Haldane Macfall's reputation in the past largely has rested upon his critical writings. As an art critic, he is something of a power in London, and I think something of a terror, too, to poseurs and claquers. During the war he gained a wide audience with two books explaining the horror to the Man-in-the-street, for he is also a practical soldier of long experience, and is entitled to call himself major. Meanwhile, his novels languish, and it is primarily as a novelist that Haldane Macfall will figure in the literary chronicles of the future.

Mr. Macfall will write other novels before he dies, but he need not unless he wishes. His fame is assured by those already written! "The Wooings of Jezebel Pettyfer" and "The Masterfolk." Few better novels have been written in the language.

Before I go further, I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Judge Malmin. \* \* \* Loitering in Walter Hill's book shop, upon a day not long since, I was beset by an excited man who plunged in, awkwardly waving a book about his head. The man was Lucius J. M. Malmin, chief justice of the Virgin Islands, and America's first colonial judge; the book was "The Wooings of Jezebel Pettyfer." The man had found the book in a shop in St. Thomas, an island recently purchased from Denmark. With some agitation, he handed me the volume, saying: "I'm afraid to say what

I think about this book. I've brought it up from St. Thomas for you to read. I know it isn't famous, but either I'm crazy or this is one of the great books of the world!"

Unless I am crazy, the Judge is not. The next day, I was as excited as he. I sat up all night to finish the book's 403 pages, breakfasting on strong coffee at five o'clock. Then I wrote to Haldane Macfall. A little later, I read "The Masterfolk," and now I am trying to excite others. If I am fortunate, I shall always marvel at the odd chance that brought "Jezebel Pettyfer" up from the Virgin Islands (a strange place for Jezebel!) to my Chicago apartment, and whatever may happen I shall always be grateful to Judge Malmin—and, of course, to Haldane Macfall.

The habit of comparing one book with another, of allowing it to stand or fall critically, by its measure as taken beside that of a classic, is a vicious one; but remotely to suggest the charm and flavor of "The Wooings of Jezebel Pettyfer," I am going to say that it is a West Indian blend of *Pickwick*, *The Three Musketeers*, and the Spanish romances of roguery. I will not push the comparison, although certainly Macfall is of the line of the great romancers.

Jezebel Pettyfer is a Barbadian negress, utterly reckless, unmoral and delightful. Even more adjectival are Jehu Sennacherib Dyle, her first recorded lover, and his amazing companions. Around this yellow pair, and its



satellites, centers the long and rambling narrative of West Indian life \* \* \* Deserted by his mother, "Masheen" Dyle (as he comes to be known, through his theft of a sewing machine) is thrown upon his small world of dirt and color at the age of nine, and manages to pry open the oyster in a fashion worthy the traditions of Lazarillo de Tormes and Guzman de Alfarache. Untruthful, unscrupulous, unblushing, the saffron *pícaro* progresses through vagabond youth to disreputable middle life, as bar-rack boy, butler, soldier, deserter and fugitive, and the successive love affairs of Jezebel Pettyfer keep step with his astonishing adventures.

There is no more plot to the book than there is to "Tristram Shandy," and that is one reason that it is great. The other reasons have to do with Mr. Macfall's uncensored and uproarious humor, his fine humanity and tolerance, and the tumult and gusto of his style—some would call it his lack of style. The vigor of the narrative is extraordinary, and the characterization is unforgettable. Dyle, Jezebel, Boaz Bryan and the rest of the sable company remain in the memory as do Sam Weller and Huck Finn—sometimes, as do Pantagruel and Panurge. The chapter in which Huckle-back, the Jamaican inn keeper, is killed by the English sailor, is one of the great scenes in English fiction, but there are other chapters almost equally good, and the purely descriptive passages are gorgeous revelations.

Ten books, or divisions, complete the narrative; and a very remarkable series of chapters makes up the book called "In the House of the Sorcerer." In this there is an appalling description of West

Indian voodoo. If any fuller revelation of the obscene mysteries of voodoo has been vouchsafed in print, I have not seen it \* \* \* It should be mentioned, here, that these particular chapters once were published in this country under the title, "The House of the Sorcerer," but that book is less than one half of the full tale, and it now out of print.

That all this praise should be given a novel of negro life may seem strange, although why it should, I do not know; but the novel is an authentic masterpiece, possibly the last of the great line of picaresque romances which began with "Lazarillo de Tormes" and includes "Tyl Eulenspiegel," "Gil Blas," and the "Pickwick Papers." There is all the freedom, all the roguery, all the romance, and all the rollicking, ironic philosophy of the best of them, and "Jezebel Pettyfer" is as deserving of immortality as any.

I have been looking over some of the old "notices" of the novel, the trumpetings and shudderings of the reviewers of 1898. The book made a sensation. Coming as it did at the height of the "renaissance of the nineties," it must have frightened some of the posing critics of that period half to death. The sickly imaginings of the English decadents must have seemed pale stuff beside the broad fun of John Dyle and his nigger Zouaves. Afraid to damn the book, many reviewers avoided the issue of greatness by ambiguous platitudes, but many, too, were outspoken in its favor, and frankly called it great. That it bothered the critics mightily is very evident. Old George Meredith enigmatically told the author that the book was the finest novel of his generation, but

that it ought never to have been written!

The strangest feature of the case is that the great book was allowed to go out of print. In the midst of the shout, a fire in the publisher's plant destroyed what remained of the edition, and he refused to reprint. It was not until 1913 that a second edition was placed on the market. Copies of this, I am happy to report, are still to be procured; and it is pleasant to know that the reissue was brought about by hundreds of requests from all parts of the world—isolated requests in themselves, but constituting a formidable demand when assembled in the publisher's office.

It is a long time since I have been as enthusiastic about a book as I am about "Jezebel Pettyfer," for it is a long time since I have found anything new in this genre. Here is the stuff of Rabelais and Grimmelshausen, of Le Sage and Sterne, geographically translated to the tropics; and the author still lives and writes. The book is of our own day, yet is neither translation or redaction; but it is of the shining company. This is incredible, but it is true.

In "The Masterfolk," which is dedicated to Meredith, Mr. Macfall writes of literary London and artist Paris in the eighteen-nineties, and some of his maskers are thinly disguised. Like its predecessor, this novel appeared in America, some years ago, sadly cropped and abbreviated. To read it in its entirety, it is necessary to procure the London edition.

I am enthusiastic about "The Masterfolk," too, but in a different way. This novel belongs to another school. It is a great novel in the sense that "David Copperfield" and "Joseph Vance" are

great novels; a full and generous account of the career of its chief figure from a point just this side of the womb to the birth of the hero's own first child. It is concerned almost exclusively with the bohemian life, and is a first-hand chronicle of an arresting period in literature.

There have been other novels concerned with the eighteen-nineties, in which the decadents were glorified; this, in large part, is the other side of the episode. The specious philosophy of the great poseurs of the age is reduced to rags and tatters, and a number of eminent reputations still beloved of collectors of first editions (I am convinced that I could give the real names of half the characters in the book), are made extremely ludicrous and contemptible by the author's biting satire. Hichens' "The Green Carnation" has been widely accepted as the crowning satire on *fin de siècle* London, but, as Mr. Holbrook Jackson has pointed out, that ingenious work is in reality less of satire than an indiscretion; at any rate, it was *tour de force*. For me, "The Masterfolk" is the last word on the English decadents. Also, I think it contains the best pictures of student life in Paris that I have read.

The story is that of Noll Baddlesmere and Betty Modeyne, and the numerous company with which their fortunes were cast. I shall now proceed to damn the book for a great many sonorous donkeys by saying that, in spots, it is highly Dickensian. It is the fashion, now, to sneer at Dickens—not that Dickens cares! Yes, the tale is romantic to a degree. More, it is often sentimental. *Mon Dieu!* Poor Mr. Macfall! But sneers from sonorous donkeys are praise

indeed, and so we may continue happily with the story. I was going to say that the tale is intensely human, in that it is humorous and humane, ironic and compassionate. To make it genuinely great, there is that touch of caricature and exaggeration that must accompany romance in a tale not of the immediate present. Having read this novel, one has made the acquaintance of a company of persons from whom never again is one quite willing to be parted. Drawn full length, for Mr. Macfall is always outspoken, his familiars live with the other memorable figures with whom the great novelists have peopled the world for our delight.

To complete the bibliography, I must mention a third essay in fiction—like the others it is colored truth—execrably entitled "The Nut in War." Mr. Mac-

fall's title, "The Unlicked Cub," is retained as a sub-title, but his publisher played to the gallery. It is a short story of novelette length, and relates the experiences of a "nut" (English, not American, idiom) in a hectic African campaign. The tale is vivid and entertaining, but to speak of it beside the two novels is to flatter it.

Lest the tone of this paper offend, I hasten to add that it is no shout of discovery. Others have discovered Haldane Macfall; he is being discovered every few years, and with each discovery a new shout goes up. And with each shout fresh readers are won to this fine novelist. But the clamor has been too isolated and sporadic. If it can be made sustained, perhaps in time it will reach an attuned ear in the American publishing world.

## Indifference

BY MARX G. SABEL

I have grown too wise  
To mutter curses,  
I have seen too many eyes,  
Too many hearses—

I have seen the one I love  
Sleep, and wake, and move!

# Blue Sunday

BY BEN HECHT

SCENES—The Boudoir of the Charming Heloise.

TIME:—Afternoon on the Holy Sabbath.

PERSONAE:—The Charming Heloise, and the Superior Roderick.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

(*An indignation point*).

The Blue Laws.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

You are indignant?

THE CHARMING HELOISE

Naturally.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

You amuse me.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

You don't think they're coming?

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Oh yes, I am convinced utterly that they impend. There will be no movies on Sunday, no automobile riding, no picnics, no public gatherings for any purpose save worship.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

A parcel of psychopathic despots converting their infirmities into laws.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

I detest movies. I detest automobile riding. I detest public gatherings. I would rather cut my throat than go pic-

nicing. Confronted with the necessity of attending an amusement park on Sunday I would, without hesitancy, sell myself down the river.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

But the principle of the thing; having to live in a country run by a pack of psalm singing, blear-eyed degenerates.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

I leave principles for my betters. I prefer facts. I look forward eagerly to laws which will bar the Elks and Modern Woodmen from parading under my window even for one day of the week; which will deprive fat women and oleaginous men from flaunting their ugliness in tan automobiles even for one day; which will make it charmingly impossible for me to share your company with a few thousand plaguey strangers at a concert or show.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

Oh!

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

You see?

THE CHARMING HELOISE

I am not taken in by your sophistries. I see that you are, as usual, trying to convert your indignations into the indifference of a bogus superiority.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Indeed.



## THE CHARMING HELOISE

Yes, indeed! You are really madder at the idea of blue laws than I am.

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Blue Laws be damned!

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

See! I knew it.

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Pink Laws, green laws, black laws, blue laws; the more the merrier. The suppression of the mob is the chief function of civilization. As the result of centuries of struggle the mob has taken civilization into its own hands. Nothing however, is impaired by this. The mob, having overthrown autocracy, and won the privilege of being its own autocrat, will eventually do exactly what autocracy wore itself out trying to do. It will suppress itself. Given a chance to assert itself under political or social democracy, what does the mob do? I ask you, what? It suppresses itself. It passes laws denying itself every variant of pleasure which its stunted imagination is able to conceive as existant. And the result? The ultimate result? A perfect world, nothing less. A world in which the mob will have reduced itself to its original biological status—a vast galley slave, cowering during its hard won leisure before self-made superstitions. Damn it, the spectacle almost gives me a temporary faith in the existence of a Divine Wisdom. You see, there's not enough beauty or pleasure in the world to go around. Not by far. Also, if allowed license to dash about and enjoy itself our mob would, in less than a month, debauch what there was of beauty and pleasure in its filthy embrace.

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

Generalities never mean quite anything, and your facts are nothing more than effort to escape from your normal indignation in the matter. You talk like that in order to hide the one vital fact that your inferiors are able to tell you what to do and what not to do.

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Absurd. My inferiors are able to deprive themselves of liberties whose existence in the world, are, at present, an intense, a constant annoyance to me. The blue laws will accomplish only one thing in which I am at all interested. They will reduce a rabble of numbskulls to misery and thus heighten by contrast, the subtle and intricate joys I am able to get out of life by the exercise of my thought and senses.

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

And what are these subtle and intricate joys to which you so modestly refer?

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

The touch of your hand. The gentle bewilderment of your eyes. The reluctant promise of your blush.

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

Indeed!

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

I love you.

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

But it's Sunday afternoon.

## THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

A day on which sin achieves an added piquancy.

## THE CHARMING HELOISE

Yes, I know. Let's pretend the blue laws are in operation.

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

I see. And are to be observed.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

Exactly. And I sit cowering before self-made superstitions.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

*(Hastily)*

Reality forbids.

*(He kisses her).*

THE CHARMING HELOISE

Please. I'm serious. Your theories have interested me. I'm going to cower. Of what then will your subtle and intricate joys consist?

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

Well, of your cowering for one. Alas, I wish it were no mere pretense.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

I see. An added fillup to the moment of capitulation.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

I salute your excellent psychology with a blush.

THE CHARMING HELOISE

Well, I've made up my mind. We are going to observe the blue laws this afternoon and capitulate some other day.

THE SUPERIOR RODERICK

An editorial "We," my dearest.

*(He consults a memoranda book, studying its contents with a meditative, a subtle and intricate air. He goes to the telephone).*

Hello, Central. Give me Boulevard 2002.

"If this is blunt honesty," says Vortex in the play, "give me a bit of smooth-tongued roguery;" and so say half the world, who can purchase the appearance of attachment, without the repulsive condition of being always obliged to listen to the truth. Flattery is a quality so grateful to the human heart, that it is difficult to resist its influence, even when convinced of the insincerity of the person who offers it. We are cajoled by the reflection that we deserve praise and it is a matter of indifference from whom we receive it.—*Anon.*

# Abdel-Kader and the French Lady

BY LAFCADIO HEARN

IT IS hardly necessary to dwell upon the noble and generous character of Abdel-Kader, an Arab chieftain, whose name is familiar the world over. On one occasion during his imprisonment, a French lady of wealth and title fell in love with the bronzed warrior, and attempted to force him into a liaison. Abdel-Kader was as honestly moral as he was brave, and knew nothing of that morbid sentimentality which even in America produces such astonishing sympathy on the part of young women not only for histrionic celebrities but even for notorious criminals. On gaining admission to the sheik's apartments, the duchess—for such she is said to have been—was disappointed to find Abdel-Kader sitting on a divan in the midst of his attendants. After some polite formalities the lady was obliged to request the Emir for permission to see him alone, and was bidden to call the following morning at daybreak—the hour of prayer. She gladly availed herself of the invitation.

"I permit you to seat yourself on the ground beside me," said Abdel-Kader, who was scrupulous in regard to Oriental etiquette. "You may speak with confidence. The squirrel and the butterfly are discreet. I am prepared to hear whatever you may have to say."

In spite of this chilling reception the fair sinner poured out her soul in words of passionate admiration, and ended by exclaiming that she loved Abdel-Kader

enough to become his slave, and to follow him to the desert.

"Well, that might be done," observed the chief, who seemed to suppose the lady was merely seeking his charity and protection; "what are you able to do?"

"A little of everything. I draw tolerably well, play a little, and understand embroidery."

"Do you know how to take care of sheep?"

"I have never tried; but I do not think that can be very hard," answered the infatuated with a timid laugh.

"Vanity is a defect," gravely replied the son of the Narabout. "Do you know how to shear them?"

"I think I would know."

"Doubt is more evil than ignorance. Do you know how to prepare food?"

"I know how to broil eggs with truffles."

Abdel-Kader meditated a while and continued.

"Are you depending upon your relatives?"

"Only upon my husband."

"Does he no longer love you?"

"He has never loved me."

"Does he desire to be rid of you?"

"He does not lack the wish, but the means."

"He has never had the occasion?"

"Perhaps—at least he has never known how to take advantage of it."

"Is he in the army?"

"No; he lives on his estates."

"Good! Go seek him; give him this purse of gold and bear him word that I am willing to swear to clothe you, feed you, and never to put you away without good reason."

And he handed the stupefied lady a velvet purse containing a hundred louis.

For an instant the woman remained speechless; but the joke was too good to remain unappreciated even by its victim. She burst into a hearty fit of silvery laughter, which startled even the

silent squirrels and the discreet butterflies.

Abdel-Kader gazed upon her in grave perplexity and astonishment; then rising he folded his *burnous* about him without changing a muscle of his handsome face, and, turning his back upon his visitor, strode away, muttering:

"Verily the singer spake well when he likened woman for levity to the down that falls from the bosom of the swallow—too light to fall to earth, too heavy to rise to heaven."

## The Weavers

BY CARMELITE JANVIER

Life is a loom on which we weave our dreams;  
 The warp is gray . . .  
 As gray as slanting rain  
 Or twilight  
 Or the desolate sands on which the hungry gulf  
 Forever gnaws and changes not.  
 But many-colored is the changing woof  
 And some there be whose colors never fade,  
 But glow and deepen as the ever marching years  
 Turn dreams to deeds.  
 But some buy cheaply in the market place:  
 Getting a red at cost, a purple for a song,  
 Or, happily,  
 A blue thrown in for measure!  
 Then, lo, before the pattern is complete—  
 If any pattern they were working on  
 And not a "hit and miss" or "crazy quilt" design—  
 The woof is grayer than the warp . . .  
 As gray as factory smoke.



# On the Backs of Men

BY DARRELL FIGGIS

I HAVE just returned from a picture-show, where the exhibitor, besides being a friend of mine, is a great artist. To allege that a great artist is merely a painter of great pictures is a crude evasion, as the vulgar, but shrewd, use of the word "artist" will reveal to the wise and thoughtful. A great artist is one who looks on the world from an unexpectedly and suddenly truthful angle and, surrendering the modes by which other angles were properly (or improperly) rendered, captures the unexpected trick that will truthfully express his unexpected sight. He is something of a philosopher; but his philosophy is remote, in the depth of his observing and supplementing mind; and it is his craft that makes it immediate to us. Then we are stopped, and thoughtfully go a different road from what we had intended. We are in love with him—even when we hate him. He and we share a peculiar but common world, and are of a separate, aristocratic race.

These qualities were finely evidenced at the picture show from which I have just returned. There I had wandered among the pictures seeing a world so quaintly unfamiliar, so astonishingly true, so held in a rare revealing light and, withal, so composed in unexpected distances. But it was not till I came across a small picture in a corner that my lips were crossed by a little wry smile that was the facial overflow of a burst of silent laughter in my mind.

And yet I was shocked and astonished. I was shame-faced in a new secret link of unity with the known male world of men. I drew into the corner, usurping all sight of the picture, to plumb the depths of my shocking discovery—of which I had been restlessly aware (somehow, somewhere) since the sixth day of a botched Creation.

The picture was called "A Wanderer", but its title is nothing. It represented a west of Ireland shop-counter. Behind the counter, facing me, sat the owner; large, obscure, impervious, grandly contemplating the local world he drew into his intricate net of accounts that, once opened, could never be settled. This side of the counter stood two men, one looking down upon the other. He who looked down was a tall farmer in a black wideawake hat, with the contemplative philosophy of woe-begone ages seated in the proud unbreakable dignity of his cast of feature. He was spare and proud; the shop-keeper was impassive and triumphant; and it seemed that nothing could impeach the tolerant reserve with which they interestedly looked on the little fellow who formed the third of the group.

It was on this little fellow that I also looked. He stood—well, facing away from me; and in that was he revealed so strangely to me, revealed so shockingly to me. I saw in him another whom I knew; the dear and lovable friend whom both I and the artist knew, and who was now exposed to me from

an unexpected and suddenly truthful angle. I was confused. Perhaps it was because I was confused that I chuckled. For what is laughter but an escape from the egregious wrong done us by our Maker?

Whether the artist intended what he drew, or whether he was betrayed by a reminiscence of his mind, I do not know. I would not dare to ask, though I knew him well, lest worse befall. The other two men in the picture saw nothing of the little fellow. That is to say, they only saw his frontwards, his passable show before men, the accidentals of his composed and composable appearance, the mask of his anatomy, the things that mattered not because familiar and adjustable. It was to me his soul was revealed; and not his soul alone, but the soul of my dear and lovable friend. And I laughed because I was humiliated, for a whole philosophy of mankind had been presented to me, equipped with which, it seemed to me, I could judge my fellows with desperate and relentless accuracy.

There he was, that little fellow, with a cap set crooked on his curly nob, pulling the curls beneath it and exposing the scalp. His back was incredibly long over the stumpy legs, which seemed as if they must be perpetually bent at the knees, and about which the trousers dropped in creases and gathered in folds upon the ankles. The back seemed all the longer because the coat was long; but this coat was (by the intentness of the artist's vision) caught up diagonally across the part between, which was thus shown to stick out energetically and vivaciously toward one, hinting at, but not too crudely revealing,

a bow-like arch of the spine above it, to compensate for the forward drop of the neck above. The back was alive. It was full of vitality, pert, violent. Poised upon its energetic and obtruding base it was droll and humorous; it was without reserves or reticences; it was ur-chinesque, the back of a leprechaun; yet it was a sinuous, a loyal and most lovable back. Heavens, what an expressive backside it was. The long dragging coat—caught, by the hand in pocket, diagonally across its aggressive base—did but the more peculiarly and expressively reveal it. No words can describe how expressive it was. No frontward of the man could be so expressive of his personality. Seeing that long, curved, drooping, alert, and ingeniously humorous backside, that aggressive, pugnacious and vivacious backside, surmounted by a curly nob on a short neck, and set above bent and stumpy legs about which the trousers dropped, I knew far more about that man than ever his frontward could have successfully masked from me. The sight was a revelation of soul. It was a point of vantage for the reading of character from which nothing could be hidden. It was therefore shameful and shocking. It was humiliating. One felt inclined to avert one's eyes from that backside; and only with a chuckle (itself obscene) could one continue to gaze fascinatedly upon it. For nothing was withdrawn. Here was the weakness in the male armoury, that the sixth day of Creation had maliciously contrived, and that man had for centuries forgotten. All that the owner of this backside was with such pert and triumphant success, with such droll and adventurous aban-

don, masking from his companions, was written for me to see who stood there, had he been wise, he would never have suffered them to stand.

Altogether it was a singular backside. But I was halted. Was it a singular backside? I turned sharply round, to see my grave and kindly friend the artist surveying me across the room. His head was bent thoughtfully to one side, the light from the roof shone on his silvered hair. His lips smiled, showing his teeth and his eyes were full of light. What had he seen? Would his reminiscent mind reveal me one of these fine days in all this shocking nakedness of soul? I felt the strongest desire to stow my backside somewhere outside the room while my frontward went up smilingly to engage in conversation with him. I told him that I had been admiring a jolly picture by him—"jolly" was the word my frontward used—but I kept facing him. When I left him I still faced him. No more pictures for me. I moved around the room, facing him all the time. Finally I managed to escape from the room, still facing him, and bolted down the stairs.

For a painful memory had stung me, coming from some far place in time. It was of a barber's shop, a place of many mirrors. I had been struggling into my coat—when suddenly I had seen a thing that stopped me. I had remained half in and half out of my coat, motionless for some moments of fascination and horror. There in the mirror before me, reflecting the mirror behind me, I saw a thing I had not seen before, the existence of which I had not even doubtfully suspected. All those pleasing images of themselves that men build

for their comfort—(images, if not of beauty, at least of manliness, by which they sustain their place in the world—images that fill the eye with bravery and purpose)—fell into dust at the sight. Those were, I remember, terrible moments as I hung half in and half out of my coat, gazing before me—no, behind me!—with surprise and alarm, while my comfortable illusions of myself melted like a vision before an overpowering conviction of reality. It was my true and terrible character I had seen, not the cold phantasm in the faith of which my life was being conducted. There it had been written (no terrors will wring from me what it was), all that my composed frontward had so becomingly effaced,—to myself at least, if not to others. Then I had with sharp decision clothed myself, and gone forth, and resolutely forgotten—till my friend's attentive regard, coming upon his pictured revelation had so firmly recalled it to me.

I fled from him; but alas, from myself I could not flee. As I went homeward up the street a pathetic desire was in me to tuck my backside around every corner. Anything to hide it, to have done with it, to disown it utterly. I felt vengeful against my Maker, that He should have left in so promiscuous and unguarded a place as this clue to a man's character. My faith, so little of it was left, was fatally undermined. There was a hymn that one had learnt in childhood, exhorting one to face every danger. But how could one face this danger? It was strictly unfaceable. Besides which, the problem was to arrest others from facing it, not to face it one's self—certainly not to face



it one's self. Every footstep I heard behind me stirred my apprehension. I was being given away; literally given away; for if I turned to face him that was behind, he that was before would then read away to his heart's content. There was no escape. Now I know why the Ancient Mariner was in such dread of the fate that followed him; for it was said by the wise Greeks that character is fate, and it is there character is to be discovered. It is there character is fatally revealed and cannot aforesaid thought and wilfully be disguised by "putting on a brave front to the world."

At last I am returned home in safety, and can with composure (being seated) think over the matter. I perceive that I have an infallible clue in my hand. Many events that had seemed mysterious in my life are now clear as day. They swarm upon my mind, unloosed from the cells of memory by that evocative clue. I will catch, and set down, a few of the more forward of them.

There is, for example, the case of B., the famous novelist. I had never liked his work. That is to say, I had never respected it; much less had it stirred me with any conceivable kind of emotion but that of exasperation at seeing only too clearly the trick by which it was done. Yet, the more obvious the trick the more instant the praise, and not to praise him was to be looked-upon. I was looked-upon. I was the more looked-upon because I said in the columns of sundry journals, anent the same B., that not by exterior care and surface observation would Art be justified of her soul. I had even said, with monstrous irrelevance, that what did not matter outside of Art would

never be made to matter inside of Art, whatever the craft of accomplishment. Then I was decried. The point is, no one believed I was serious. One editor, I remember, nearly intrigued me into joining the universal song out of very anger by saying: "You do B., will you? You always slate B. Nothing does a paper so much good as slating a popular author." After that, I wrote about B. no more. I questioned my soul about him. Was I right; or was I wrong? Could Art join the general antic, and dance (even so gravely as B. did) on the lava-crust of volcanos forever dead? I was troubled; and kept silence.

Then one day as I walked down Fleet street with a companion, he lifted his hand in salutation to someone whom I did not notice. As we passed on, he said: "You know B. surely?" "Not I," I said with vigor. "I thought you did," he said. "We just passed him." I turned about to see him. I have never met him face to face. What I saw then was all that I have ever seen of him. And it was enough, for I saw what he could not disguise from me. Not having the clue that is now in my hand I cannot describe precisely what I saw (and in such a matter it were a sin against science to draw on invention); but I perfectly remember the light that filled my mind. I knew I was right in not respecting his work. With such a backside it was impossible that I could have respected his work. To be sure, at that moment I would have put it quite in this way; but I knew then that I had caught him unawares, and that he had been given away. What I had divined in his books was what had in a motion been revealed before my eyes.



Then there was the case of K. To me this is a tragic case, and I will say little of it. For I had loved K. K. and I had walked together, and talked magnificently of all great things that mattered, till night was old and gray and day was winsome and flushed. We had drank together, as might perhaps be guessed. We had pledged eternal loyalty to all great lost causes; and we had even joined together in some of them. We met always with deep and open affection, for with him affection was a manly exercise. I would say to myself that whoever fell away K. would ever be staunch. But one unhappy day I stood behind K., and saw that he had a pinched and penurious backside. My mind was dark with doubt and unhappiness, for it was a timid backside, a backside that slunk away, an evasive backside on which no honourable spine could have reposed with firmness and security. I did not know then all that I now know; but I knew then I was unhappy at something. Like the spine I was without security. I have not seen K. for many years; but the other day I heard that he was entered in the legions of lost and successful souls. I was angry then; but I am not angry now. I am only sad. For perhaps a man may be captain of his soul; but there are, I perceive, parts of himself of which he cannot be captain.

I will give only one more case. It concerns C., and a critical moment of my life. I will not count how many years ago it is; but it was when I was younger than I now am. I had a bagful of poems and a pocketful of pence—not a new conjunction; but one that is more picturesque to write about than

pleasant to experience. Let me say firmly that the melodramatist who depicts such moments as grim and desperate is a truthful man and a realist. The poor love melodrama, for they know that the consummate melodramatist of all is Real Life. So I counted my pence, and I selected from my poems, and I threw them all in a gambler's cast.

I went to see C. My pence would take me across London and bring me back, and I would hand my poems into his hand. No more post for me. I had had enough of the post. There was no more dread sound in the world than the postman's knock, except it were the fall of manuscript on the doormat. So I gathered my pence, and went to see C.

I went early, so as not to miss him; but as I rounded the corner of his street he bore down upon me and passed me. I stood still, looking after his retreating figure; and it is possible that unmanly tears may have gathered in me. Remember the poor pence I had expended. But I was comforted; and then I was encouraged; for I saw his backside. It was an ample backside, but that was, in a manner of speaking, the least part of it. It was generous; it was trustworthy; it was, in a more than material sense, capacious; it was, above all, king-like, reposeful, without mean reserve or stintings. Mark, I do not say I said all these things then; but that I thought them, or rather that I divined them, is certain, for my misgivings died, my woes were diminished, and I became confident. His countenance might have done all this for me; but I could not see his countenance. I saw only the backward parts of him, vanishing down the road—with difficulty vanishing,

but vanishing all the same by the necessity of distance. Far more than by any frontward view was I assured of him. Why should I have grown light-some, but that I knew my luck was turned? For I had been placed where his character was revealed to me, so that I went forward confidently to him, touched his arm, and all that I had expected was unfolded to me in a kinglike and cautious bounty of his goodness.

So that it seems I had always known of this truth—what one may perhaps

be forgiven for calling this stern truth. The truth is not an arresting novelty, but an astonishing affirmation. And looking now on the world from this unexpected and suddenly truthful angle I am in fear for the undoing of men unless they can discover a new hindward mask and composure. It will not be so easy, I imagine, to "put on a brave backside to the world." And in the meantime I foresee a great future for pictorial art in the analysis of character.

## To Mad Philosophers

BY JOHN McCLURE

*"All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream."*

But is a dream less real to ye  
(Dream also) than reality?  
Is death a sweeter thing because  
You call it phantom? Since when was  
The dreamer and the dream distinct?  
They are inextricably link'd.  
You come back climbing circle-wise  
The ancient spiral of your lies.  
Reality a dream, you say?  
The dream, then, is reality —  
And Grief and Pain and Death and Hell  
Not wholly, then, fantastical.  
Perhaps beyond the noumenon,  
Beyond the dreamer, may be One  
Who could dispel them with a breath:  
*To you—dream image—they are death.*  
*Dreams, to another dream, may be*  
*Even realer than reality.*

# Monsieur Satan

BY BENJAMIN DE CASSERES

THE French have strange names. There are Monsieur Brave-Man, Funny-Man, Man-God, and so on. It is probably part of the Gallic imagination—these names. So when I went to see the celebrated Monsieur Satan in Paris I was no more astonished to find that that was really his name than that the name of the greatest poet in the world to-day is Gabriel the Announcer.

Monsieur Satan fascinated me, but did not astound me. Probably because I had known him always—or fancied I did. He had a negligent, self-revealing manner. He would pronounce dogmatically the most astonishing paradoxes in a tone of voice such as one would use when one would say, "plate of buckwheats, please."

He had, apparently, lived everywhere, travelled everywhere, knew everybody, knew everything. A person *de rigueur*. He went through life seeing, recognizing, uttering, drinking. His impersonality was frightful. He said he was the right-angle of a circle, the fraction of a cipher, an eternally movable horizon—then he'd smile at my puzzled air and order another absinthe.

Beautiful summer night at the Pré-Catelan before the war. Paris gleamed in the distance like a monstrous convention of fire-flies. You could look right through the stars into the Néant beyond, the night was so clear.

We were on the question of the cinematograph. I was bound to hear something original, as the third person pres-

ent (no less a person, by the way, than Remy de Gourmont) had informed me I would—no matter what Monsieur Satan touched on.

"Yes", he began suddenly, as if answering a question that had been asked about a thousand years before, "the Truth is out. We have discovered the Great Secret. The method of the Mysterious Force is known.

"In the screenless 'movies', imperfect as yet, wherein with the aid of a powerful light phantoms are projected on a dark stage, we have the secret of ourselves revealed. For we, sir, are phantoms, condensed etheric rays of varying degrees of ponderability, thrown on the dark stage of the world, and made visible to one another by a Light. This Light emanates from a Universal Mind, and if it ever ceases to be, we—the phantoms—shall cease to be with it, and the little playlets that we call our experiences will be no more. *Voilà tout.*

"Nothing has ever given us the sense of pleasure in the tragedies of existence like the moving picture. It has deepened the aesthetic consciousness of the race more than anything else. By aesthetic consciousness I mean the ability to enjoy life as a work of art, as a sublime tragi-comedy, or a farcical tragedy, or ironical drama—it is merely a matter of temperament whatever you call it.

"The Producer—in his Hidden Box—sees life exactly as we see it in the screenless 'movies'. His (or Its)

emotion is always pleasurable no matter what happens to these puppets that we are."

After this piece of pure Spinozism fired into the night from the piazza of the Pré-Catelan he poured in his ab-sinthe, and continued:

"Have you ever tried to analyze why we enjoy the woes of Oedipus, Hamlet, Lear, Phédre? Why we love the diabolic and inhuman in art? Why the Borgias, the Neros and the Napoleons fascinate us? It is the triumph in us of the artistic sense over the personal bias. It is the 'movie' instinct in the human brain dominating the pity and whimper in the human heart. We are passionately in love with life as life—the more complex, the harder, the more terrible, the profounder the fatality that it reveals to us the greater the ultimate pleasure.

"When a man applauds the acting of Iago he is something of a god.

"Whether it is the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, the 'Inferno' of Dante, the human hells of Dostoievsky or Balzac, or the satanism of Poe, it is the great spectacle that we demand. The eye and the brain and the nerves must be feasted. We are all pagans in this sense.

"Did not the author of the Book of Job and Goethe in 'Faust' (a clean filch of the latter from the former) make of life a 'frame-up'—*un coup monte*, as we say in French? Here we are doing our bit while we are being filmed on the endless running screen of Time.

"The plots of life are infinitely various. We are only posed phantoms. We are in a studio—call it the Universe if you will; and the Director you will never know here."

And Monsieur Satan let a smile rove over his face. Had he remembered some past meeting somewhere with—

"But, Monsieur Satan," I broke in on that frosty smile, "where are all the films of these playlets kept?"

"Why," he replied, "in the pigeon-holes and cylinders of the air."

"And where may they be?" I asked, while Remy de Gourmont drew invisible arabesques on the serviette with a fork.

"All around us," replied this man in the secrets of the Infinite. "All light photographs; that we know, and the Light that we call consciousness—do you not think that that photographs and registers everything also?

"Every movement here on earth is registered in Space materially; and its metaphysical motive is registered in the mind—the Light—of the Supreme Consciousness.

"Space is an immeasurable, unimaginable collection of scenarios. It is at the present moment, through the operations of light, putting this scene into etheric waves or boxes of ether.

"Some day when an apparatus I am working on is complete I'll show you the firing on Fort Sumpter, the Siege of Paris, the Neanderthal man at home *en famille*. They are all up there, and long after the earth with its pomp and vanities and phantoms has crumbled to cosmic dust or vanished into some strange sun the light waves, flashing eternally through space, will continue to carry the immaterial—if you like that word—record of all that was done here on this sun-flake, itself purely phantasmagoric.

"And the Unknowable enjoys it all, for some times, I imagine, the plot gets



## SUN BALLET

beyond its foresight, and its characters quicker than a flash of light (I say this get strangely mixed up. Then it feels literally) and with a frosty smile brought the two children to the table of the half-crazed mother.

"But you see, do you not, that we are all in the 'movies'?"

Just then a pony cart in which were seated two children bolted down the road. Monsieur Satan was at the reins And was that act being recorded, too—in the ether—in favor of Monsieur Satan?

## Sun Ballet

BY JEANETTE MARKS

When the sun sprang up in the east that time,  
Her head was gold and her shoes were gay  
Spangled slippers on dancing toes  
And skirts like a full blown rose.  
I looked at the sun and I said, "Today  
In the sun ballet  
The sun will dance to the west away!" . .  
*And the sun danced.*

She poised her slippers in rainbow slime,  
She twirled up skyward in skirts of rose,  
She tossed her head in its helmet gold,  
Danced in the heat and laughed at the cold,  
Spun and twinkled and sparkled and pranced  
In the sun ballet  
Over the earth and west away! . .  
*And the sun set.*

Oh, la, la, what a world it is!  
With only a moon and such silly stars,  
Sermons on dancing and Christians in wars,  
Capital cornered and nations to let! . . .  
Well, in the sun ballet  
The sun sprang up in the east that time,  
Poised her slipper in rainbow slime,—  
*And the sun danced!*

## Starrett's Chicago Letter

IN THE DEATH, some months ago, of Prof. Richard Lynch Garner, far famed as the "monkey talk man," science sustained a loss to the extent of which it does not suspect, and would not admit if it did. I had intended to speak of Prof. Garner before this, but could find no Chicago angle upon which to hang my observations. Now, I have reason to believe that he once passed through Chicago on his way to the Pacific Coast. Thus, the way is paved for my consideration of Prof. Garner's services.

You are familiar with Garner's belief, based on years of experience in zoological gardens and African jungles, that the apes have a language consisting of "words" expressing their definite ideas, and readily comprehensible to man. The pity is—and that is the point of my *feuilleton*—that this ingenious naturalist did not live another twenty years to pursue his researches. His death at this juncture, with the world's affairs in such a knot as his own monkeys used to tie in one another's tails, is nothing less than an international calamity.

The pass to which we have come demands new ideas. The League of Nations is on skids, the League of Merchants is on stilts, the propagandists are *en route*—one way or another, and continuously—and throughout the world, as between the governing bodies and those they govern, an *impasse* has resulted such as staggers laymen when doctors disagree. In a situation of the sort, when new and unbiased minds are needed, Prof. Garner and

his monkeys might well have been the men of the hour.

From among the abler apes and gorillas of his acquaintance, Prof. Garner might have selected plenipotentiaries fitted to represent their race and religion beside the seasoned diplomats of Europe and America, and a new and splendid note of ecstasy might have been injected into the councils of the world. The language of the apes and gorillas of the powerful African states was familiar to Prof. Garner, who would have acted as interpreter until such time as the associated statesmen should have manifested a working familiarity with gorillian idiom. That the distinguished delegates from Africa would have been able to suggest original and feasible ideas, out of their long experience away from the courts and councils of modern life, seems beyond question.

It is to be hoped that Prof. Garner's followers are as eager and as energetic as was he, and that the suggestion tentatively broached here may commend itself to students of world history and economics. It is not too late to send a chimpanzee to Versailles or to the state legislature. May we not, indeed, look forward to a day in the not far distant future when a chair in Chimpanzee shall be established in our leading universities, when exchange professors from the African jungles shall address the youth of our nation (already prepared for the novelty by the moving picture serialization of Tarzan's life and exploits) in the formative years of their lives, when

ring-tailed missionaries shall visit our shores and bring comfort to our heathen when—any day in season—in the distinguished visitors' gallery of the Senate, tourists from Chicago or New Orleans may see a delegation of high-hatted gorillas listening with careful attention to the eloquent mouthings of our representatives in that esteemed and august body?

It is an intoxicating vision, and a progressive one, and the way now is open. Shall we not seize the opportunity offered by the lesson of Prof. Garner's death?—and in the meantime, by popular subscription, raise statues to those outstanding champions of the anthropoid ape: Darwin, Garner and Edgar Rice Burroughs!

\* \* \*

I should be sorry if anyone were to misunderstand the foregoing nonsense, which is an expression—feeble enough—of my contempt for politicians, popular novelists and profiteers. My admiration for Prof. Garner is high and sincere. His experiments were heroic and touched with nobility, and the ridicule to which he was often subjected by sonorous donkeys, will be in large measure the measure of his fame in later years.

The guide-book to spring fashions in fiction still is selling as hugely as the week of its appearance. "Main Street" has sold more than 125,000 copies, as I write, and that is the reason that it is the guide-book to spring fiction fashions. When he was in New York, recently, Harry Hansen, literary editor of the Chicago Daily News, was approached by three publishers and a magazine editor. The publishers had

each a secret to confide; each whispered tidings of a novel he was issuing, which the public was going to like. In each case, it developed that the novel dealt with a "small town in the middle west." The magazine editor casually asked whether any Chicago authors of Mr. Hansen's acquaintance had available short stories dealing with "life in a small Illinois town."

In short, every publisher hopes he may be able to duplicate the success of "Main Street;" every magazine editor is looking for something he may placard as being in the vein of that excellent narrative. And that is one of the tragedies of American literature. Every successful novel has as many *begats* as a chapter of the Old Testament, and each *begat* is weaker than its predecessor. I don't say that a fine novel of another stripe has no chance because of this system, but decidedly it has less chance than it would have if our publishers were freer from superstition.

If any young writer has an unsuccessful "Main Street" in his trunk, now is the time to retype the first and last sheets and hurl it eastward. If it is a sword and cloak romance that rattles in your closet, you will have to wait a bit; but have patience; sooner or later somebody will score a success with another "Richard Carvel," and your belated fame will overtake you.

\* \* \*

Chicago has lost two good men since I last wrote—Bert Leston Taylor and Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus. Both were important figures in the city's art life, and both will be missed. "B. L. T.'s" popularity was enormous; his daily column in the Tribune, "A Line-o'-Type-or-

Two," was read by more thousands than voted for Cox, perhaps by as many thousands as voted for Harding. He was an institution, and he has no successor. At least a dozen writers first came to prominence in the "Line," among them Keith Preston and Charles G. Blanden, writing under the pseudonyms of *Pan* and *Laura Blackburn*, respectively. Lesser celebrities, still known only by their initials, are numbered in the hundreds. Alas, poor Yorick!

Dr. Gunsaulus was a clergyman, a scholar and a collector. He was the author of many books, one of which, "Monk and Knight," is a colossal study of the middle ages, cast in the mold of fiction. It must contain 250,000 words at the lowest count. It is not a "Cloister and the Hearth," but it is an honest and important book, and always will have its appreciators.

\* \* \*

Noted visitors we have had again, a plenty, chief among them Rabindranath Tagore and Sir Philip Gibbs, the latter playing a return engagement which was rendered somewhat unhappy for the English war reporter by the heckling of Irish sympathizers, twenty-one of whom were ejected from Orchestra Hall during his lecture on the Irish question. Gibbs seemed unruffled by the warm reception. It requires courage to present the Irish question in Chicago, even when the attempt is to be fair. Ben Hecht, who interviewed Gibbs for the *Daily News*, characterized him thus:

"Sir Philip is an English journalist whom the war made famous. But, more than that, he is English sanity with a refillable fountain pen in its vest pocket.

His words are the symbols of a cool disillusionment. An emotionless pessimism, with its eyebrows slightly raised, a detached shrug of the shoulders, give an outline to his manner."

That may or may not describe Gibbs; I didn't see him; but it is excellent Hecht. The Hechtic manner has an outline, too, and is unmistakable.

I did not hear, Tagore, but I had a squint at him. He reminds one that prophets are not without whiskers in any country under the sun.

\* \* \*

The White Paper Club has given up its luncheon room at the Hotel LaSalle, and now meets each week in one of the University Club's rooms, and therefore in one of the handsomest buildings in Chicago, and one of the most exclusive. As a member of the White Paper Club, it is now my privilege to snub the seven-foot uniformed doorman at the University Club. Time was when, as a reporter seeking to interview a weary celebrity, I was hurled forth by the seven-foot doorman a moment after I had crossed the imposing threshold.

The White Paper Club is a democratic body, comprising poets, publishers, authors, editors, proofreaders, cataloguers, paragraphers, booksellers, and distinguished *vox pops*; in short, anyone is eligible — in theory — who "blackens white paper." In fact, no one is eligible who is not welcome to the voting body which is the club. But we are an affable outfit, predisposed to like any member of the craft.

\* \* \*

The Bookfellows are planning to hold their annual reunion in May, and it is thought that John G. Neihardt and



Hamlin Garland will be the guests of honor.

\* \* \*

The Field Museum of Natural History shortly is to open its new building to the public. For many months the exhibits have been trundling in from the old home in Jackson Park, a relic of the World's Columbian Exposition, and, at length, the last mastodon is articulated and the final dodo installed. The magnificent structure rises whitely out of the flat wilderness beyond Grant Park, and marks another milestone in Chicago's dream of beauty. The most serious obstacle in the path of the dream's complete fulfillment is the Illinois Central Railroad, which continues to belch black smoke into the heavens from its tea kettle engines. An ugly sneer, it lies across the city's pleasantest prospect and poisons the atmosphere with its breath. Electrification may come with the millenium.

\* \* \*

Speaking of the home town movement in fiction, a "small Illinois town" that should engage the talent of some novelist is Seneca, which comprises some fifteen hundred souls and hasn't boomed since 1876. It is the most typical small town of my acquaintance. Sherwood Anderson should undertake the job. If he does, I shall contribute a tale or two to his collection. One good yarn concerns John Nicholas Beffel, whose short story, "The Good Fellow," published in Reedy's Mirror, not long ago, is one of the best things I have ever read.

Beffel is a Chicagoan now, but he originated in Seneca. He was sixteen when he emigrated to Chicago. For a

month he sent home glowing letters about his prospects. Then the letters became less frequent, and in six months they ceased. A year passed, and only vague reports had reached the old folks about their wandering boy. Then, one Sunday evening in winter, when the mercury was low and the snow was piling up along Main Street, the elder Beffel sat down to his supper. He sighed as he looked at the vacant chair. Then he turned over his plate. Beneath it he found a note. The note read:

"Dear Dad—Please meet me at the old bridge at midnight, and bring a blanket or a suit of clothes. I have a hat.  
"JOHN."

Frances Donovan is a Chicagoan. Her book, "The Woman Who Waits," is a remarkable book, despite the fact that it is published by Badger. It is an intimate, personal and realistic account of the life of a waitress, for which the author gathered her information at first hand by working in Chicago eating houses of every description, and in some that defy description. The psychology of the waitress is well revealed, and her relations with the male sex are frankly stated—too frankly, some persons have thought. "The Woman Who Waits" is a book which, like "The Jungle," should stir Chicago to its vitals, for it is a book dealing with conditions that are intimately connected with Chicago's vitals.

VINCENT STARRETT.

Man is either a fool or a coward.

# Queen's Hair

*From Lancelot's Hermitage to Guenevere's Tomb*

BY JEANETTE MARKS

Oh, lie with me, lie with me,  
Color of gold!  
Love finds the grave dark,  
The light gone,  
Eyes that stare:  
Bring sleep,—  
Oh, lie with me as of old!

Oh, cover me, cover me,  
Color of gold!  
Love finds the grave deep,  
The earth cold.  
I grope for your side:  
Oh, warm me, fragrance and fold  
Of your hair!

Oh, lie with me, lie with me,  
Color of gold!  
And I shall feel sleep  
Rise like a tide on your breast,  
Flow in the gold  
Of your hair,—  
Oh, Love, I shall find rest as of old!

## Book Reviews

### THE BRIMMING CUP

BY DOROTHY CANFIELD  
(Harcourt Brace & Co.)

**I**N A curiously remote village of Vermont there is an idyllic factory. A wood-working factory, which turns out the backs of hairbrushes, small wooden boxes, and other useful but uninteresting articles. In this haven of peace there are no labor troubles! No strikes! No unions! No movies! And the simple villagers dance square dances with the grace of old Versailles.

One's credulity is taxed.

And in this village lives Marise Crittenden with her children and her husband. Neale Crittenden is the owner of this extraordinary wood-working establishment. Eleven years after a romantic marriage in Italy Marise has begun to develop strange Celtic characteristics. Like the Irish, she is ready to "creep in close about the fire and tell grey tales of what we were, and dream old dreams and faded." She is attractive, clever, magnetic; with the face of Leonardo's Saint Anne. Also, she is a brilliant and thorough musician. After cooking, cleaning the house, dressing the children, directing a lice-removing operation on the family pig, and attending to other minor domestic duties, this superwoman still finds leisure to study all the best modern music.

Neale's musical education ended with Debussy. The newer men mean singularly little in his life. Ever so much less than they mean in the life of Vincent Marsh.

Vincent is one of these idle rich men

with a nice feeling for the fine arts and a dynamic disposition. He comes to visit in this charming backwater of civilization.

The result is inevitable—for twenty-two pages Marise succumbs to the fascination of soul-searching.

It is a splendid search, conducted on strictly orthodox lines. She has a complicated little soul and she lays it bare with avidity, and in its inmost recesses she finds forgotten treasures. Exquisite bits of things, grown a trifle dusty from disuse. In the end she achieves soul-sufficiency; for she knows that, after all, only one thing really matters—love. The love that overcomes all doubts and difficulties because it springs from perfect truth and sympathy and understanding.

In "The Brimming Cup," Dorothy Canfield has given us an unusually appealing novel. It has both beauty of design and felicity of phrase, and may well challenge comparison with the best books of the year. ALICE SESSUMS LEOVY.

### ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

(Translated from Leo Shestov's "The Apotheosis of Groundlessness")

BY S. S. KOTELIANSKY  
(Robert M. McBride, New York)

Curious, is it not, that what Nietzsche asserted with such decision of believers should so neatly hit off him who is probably the greatest skeptic among the Russians, Leo Shestov. Nietzsche said: "To him who feels himself pre-ordained to contemplation and not to belief, all believers are too noisy and

obtrusive." But those "preordained to contemplation" will find the noisy and obtrusive Shestov the greatest doubter of them all. This book, called in the original "The Apotheosis of Groundlessness" might, for the sake of clearer understanding, be called "The Apotheosis of Skepticism." For Shestov is so incorrigibly a skeptic that he will not permit himself to be ensnared into a confession of positive skepticism, even, for "the denial of the possibility of positive knowledge is already an affirmation." And he will not affirm. He insists on remaining a nebulous philosophic quantity. It is only his nebulousness that is of the most decided character. He cannot be judged positively by his dislikes, nor judged negatively by his likes. The positivist and scientist, hanging hopefully on his denunciation of the metaphysicians, will find, on advancing into the next page, so severe a drubbing of science and positivism, that they will, perforce, surrender him in despair. Perhaps it was this intransigent unwillingness of Shestov to be "placed" that determined a recent compiler of a "guide book" to Russian literature who included fifty-four Russian writers and critics to omit even a mention of Shestov.

However, in the most infrequent intervals, Shestov does slip into an affirmation by way of doubt, for even he must find it difficult to balance himself constantly in mid-air without the support of some faith, even a faith in heresy or anarchy or lawlessness. But woe to him who looks for consistency in Shestov for "it is reasonable to speak of eternal hesitation and temporality of thought" which means, in the personal

application, that "constancy of principle belongs only to one's relationships with other people in order that they may know where and to what extent they may depend upon us."

A pugnacious and diabolic writer, delightful in his uncritical and unphilosophic skepticism, Shestov has written a book of brittle sterility. He concerns himself too much with odds and ends. Like the mathematician who attended a concert, we who have read this book may also foolishly inquire: "But what does it prove?"

Anatole France was right when he wrote: "I have feared the formidable sterility of those two words, 'I doubt.' Such is their force that the lips which have once advisedly uttered them are forever sealed and can nevermore be opened."

As a Russian, Shestov heralds the beginning of the orientation from too great faith. Native of a land wherein the quality of faith has been shared equally by reactionaries and revolutionists, Shestov comes with the flavor of the first anomaly.

H. S.

## FIGURES OF EARTH

BY JAMES BRANCH CABELL  
(Robert McBride & Co., 1921)

Any literary hack can analyse Shakespeare. He can show you the tricks, the defects, point out where the poet borrows here and lifts lines bodily there. But ask this critic where the magic comes in, the alchemy of the whole, and he will mumble nonsense. So with Mr. Cabell. He borrows from half a dozen literatures, a score of mythologies, and



nearly all the great ironists of the past. But what a concocter he is! Take Jurgen as instance. You may name every ingredient (and there are many) that goes to make up that master work, and still the whole will be greater than the sum of all its parts.

"Figures of Earth" is, alas, less skillfully blended. The tricks of craftsmanship, the vast impedimenta of allegory and symbolism weigh down and overtop the art, so that the effect in more passages than one is almost a burlesque of the Cabell manner. The tiresome mellifluousness of the style is insistent with its nicely timed refrains. The result is Cabell nearly at his worst. Moreover, the irony of "Figures of Earth" grows a little resentful, even where the style remains annoyingly polite. It is no longer the gallant attitude of Jurgen. I feel altogether too sorry for Manuel and so lose sight of him as a symbol of the eternal male.

But even in this book there are chapters of authentic poignancy and beauty: "Sesphra of the Dreams," (better it seems to me as it appeared in the magazine *Romance*), and the episode of the violin player toward the last of the book. Then there are passages of such magnificent artifice as to evoke perhaps not ecstasy, but keen admiration, such as both encounters with the Rider of the White Horse, and the first meeting with Alianora.

But all these things were done in Jurgen, and I for one had hoped that Mr. Cabell would not follow the lead of obvious allegory, most of which, boiled down, comes to naught, but that he would retrace his steps a bit to "The Cream of the Jest," that admirable

earlier book, and give us the double soul of a modern man—his adventures in life and beyond life. I know that Mr. Cabell is not soliciting my advice; but gratis, I give him this suggestion. Why not a comedy of modern domestic life, with supernatural overtones, if needed—for the stage?

E. D.

## CREOLE FAMILIES OF NEW ORLEANS

BY GRACE KING

(Macmillan, 1921)

New England and Virginia have each respectively, their Puritans and their Cavaliers, why should not Louisiana have also her Creole forebears properly extolled and made known?

This office is well performed in Miss King's latest, and perhaps most interesting book, "Creole Families of New Orleans."

In 1893, Mr. Paul Beckwith's "Creoles of St. Louis," exploited the knickerbockerdom of that city in a most interesting volume of genealogy. Rather ingenuously his book begins with a definition of Creoles, as . . . "those of French or Spanish descent, who are natives of Louisiana, and their descendants." Choteau, Laclede, De Menil, Cabanne, Sarpy, and many names that follow, all, are reminiscent of colonial New Orleans—the foster mother of Saint Louis.

Grace King, well known for her *Bien-ville*, *DeSoto*, and other standard New Orleans historical books, is the editor and author of this most attractive volume. The illustrations are by E. Woodward. The first 132 pages justify



the publication. Marigny and Pontalba and their times, the colonial period of *Nouvelle Orleans*, all are here daintily sketched, and an intimate insight is given of the way people lived then.

Their social intercourse as shown in the journal of Pontalba, is really a revelation: box parties at the *Comedie*, card parties at Gentilly, and with Madame Carondelet, bathing parties at Madame Macarty's, where a millrace served as natatorium—when the river was at bank level.

Some twenty odd families have their trees reviewed in this notable book, and there are many plates and illustrations throughout the text which attractively hold the reader.

Professor Woodward has helped to record many of the good examples still left in the *Vieux Carré* of early New Orleans architecture.

Now comes the really first fair attempt to chronicle in some order the colonial social structure of *Nouvelle Orleans*. Grace King has produced an exceedingly readable series of family portrait groups, and the reader need not be a native son to enjoy the traditions which this compilation records as a romantic part of New Orleans history.

There could be no more capable pen for this work than Miss King's and if she had put into form only the recollections of Marigny, Pontalba and Gayarre, the book would be justified. The journal of the elder Pontalba gives a glimpse of life in the Province such as no other document contains.

It takes centuries to perfect and raise

a saint to the altitude where he may be crowned and calendared. Heroes are often not properly memorialized for generations after they are gone—witness Lincoln.

Paul Jones the "pirate" followed Columbus the "corsair," but each now occupies his individual pedestal, and the latter will no doubt be enrolled in the galaxy of American saints—given further time.

So what matter if there be glorification in the relation of the doings of the pioneer settlers of the lower Mississippi. The tenacity of the mud turtle was needed to grip the slippery foothold of the six-by-twelve islets of habitable high ground from swamp to river's edge, which formed the colonial capital. This was the 18th century mission of those early people. It was theirs to continue to have and to hold the mouth of the Mississippi and eventually deliver to Thomas Jefferson, in God's own time, the whole valley of the Mississippi, to be finally subdivided into states, so that America—the world's greatest democracy, could round out her national solidarity for the world destiny which she recently demonstrated was her part in the affairs of nations. France build-ed better than she knew in settling New Orleans and organizing the great valley. Grace King's book reveals the quality and temper of these early settlers of Louisiana, and we may understand from this book that—whether one or another language was spoken,—the American pioneer had the stuff in him to make this country great, despite the locality in which his lot was cast.

T. P. T.

## IN AMERICAN—POEMS

BY J. V. A. WEAVER

(Alfred A. Knopf, 1921)

Here is a collection of verses in the vernacular of the pool-room and the dance-hall, some of which have previously appeared in *Smart Set*, *Poetry* and other magazines. The note struck is an original one, and the young author, barring a few banalities and metrical misdemeanors, seems very much at home in his medium. He displays a quaintness, an individuality of expression, an authenticity of emotion which carries, despite these errors.

The "sonnets" seem to me especially good. Instance "Nocturne:"

"Nothin' or everythin', it's got to be,"

You says, and hides your face down on my  
arm.

"If it meant nothin', 'twouldn't do no harm,  
Or either everythin'—but this way—see? . . ."

I feel your tremblin' heart against my coat,

And the big arc-light moon grins down so  
cool,

"Go on!" I think it says, "you softie fool!"  
I love you so it hurts me in my throat.

"Don't make me kiss you; sure, I know you  
could,"

You're pleadin', "And we gone too far to  
play;

I care a lot . . . but yet not so's to say  
I love you yet . . . Aw, help me to be good!"

Oh, darlin', darlin', can't you let it be  
Nothin' to you, and everythin' to me?

Among the longer pieces I particularly like "Denouement" and "Concerning Pikers". The latter is "rare stuff" and teaches a lesson it were well a number of us learned. My prediction is that "Johnny" Weaver will go far. There is a certain droll, urchinesque quality about him which altogether wins you. Half-mocking, half-serious, half-articulate, at once ridiculously callow and entirely sophisticated, with the sophistication of "the guy who tips you off to a sure thing", he flits, a sort of snub-nosed Pierrot in and out of the pleasures of Arcady. J. B.

## Illusion

BY LOUIS GILMORE

Do not break it again  
With harsh words

It was beautiful  
Before you spoke

And anything you can say  
Is less amusing.



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MARGINALIA

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## SOUTHERN LETTERS

IT is high time, we believe, for some doughty, clear visioned penman to emerge from the sodden marshes of Southern literature. We are sick to death of the treacly sentimentalities with which our well-intentioned lady fictioneers regale us. The old traditions are no more. New peoples, customs prevail. The Confederacy has long since been dissolved. A storied realm of dreams, lassitude, pleasure, chivalry and the Nigger no longer exists. We have our Main Streets here, as elsewhere.

It is no idle conceit to hazard that some Southern Sherwood Anderson, some less tedious Sinclair Lewis, lurks even now in our midst. A writer of the calibre of Thomas Hardy would discover here in Louisiana a native *genre* which easily out-wessex's Wessex—a peculiarly whimsical character and individual color. We do not refer to the Creole or the Nigger. George Cable has treated the former with varying success. His "Grandissimes," "Old Creole Days" and "Doctor Sevier" are great books. Written several decades ago when the Creole was still a dominant figure in the social life of New Orleans, they struck exactly the right note, but to-day, barring an historical interest, they seem distinctly *passé*. The Creole has become

almost obsolete. Contact, changing conditions, inter-marriage with his Teuton and Anglo-Saxon brother have mongrelized him beyond recognition. Some day some one with the leaning and leisure will sit down and write his swan-song, dubbing it "The Last of the Creoles."

On the other hand, the case of the Nigger in Southern literature is a pathetic one. The poor darkey has been worked and overworked to such an extent that your average reader balks at a "nigger story" in the same manner as the mule balks at the nigger. The day of dialect novels and sketches, despite the excellent work of Ruth McEnery Stuart, Joel Chandler Harris and Octavus Roy Cohen of *Saturday Evening Post* fame, is, we believe passed. Indeed, Mr. Cohen's black-faced comedians seem somehow to smack overly of grease paint and the minstrel show.

But the old rusty machinery can be junked without a qualm. There are hundreds of little towns in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana fairly bubbling with the stuff of stories. Not, necessarily, the Main Street motif, but something far and away more vital to the soil—the physical, mental and spiritual outlook of an emerging people—the soul-awakening of a hardy, torpid race, just becoming reaware of itself. The peoples of the North and East are made, those of

the Middle West and West are in the making, the peoples of the South are being remade. It is this remaking that should arrest the literary eye. The old Southern pot-boiler must go out—the lynching-bee, Little Eva, Kentucky Colonel, beautiful Quadroon stuff—a surer, saner more virile, less sentimental literature must come in. By all the symptoms the reaction is near at hand.

### THE COST OF COMPLACENCY

EVERYTHING is paid for. *Tout se paie* as the French say. The United States wishes the luxury of flaunting a government, "of the people, for the people and by the people." For this they pay dearly—through the nose. That the reality is bought and the semblance delivered need hardly be argued. A few men rule this country, a few men rule any country and, by the same token, the world. You will protest: "but they are chosen by the people who are free to vote as they will." Well, perhaps the ox led to slaughter believes he is making a "free" choice, and no doubt the father of twins judges that he acted wisely. Moreover, anyone of you is "free" to drink methylated spirits at this second. You may shake your head and declare this specious playing with words, or you may see that we are led to the conclusion that we are more fettered by our limitations than by steel manacles and hobbles. Bound tighter by prejudices and ideas than by cords. Some are bound to follow, some bound to lead, and as I was saying—everything is paid for.

There are then: those that govern, those that are governed and the go-betweens. These last are the politicians. Do the rulers desire peace and neutrality? Then these fancy boys, taking their cue, cry for peace at any price, they appeal to America to keep her head above the mad discord and teach the world a lesson in self-control—incidentally they suggest that we will not lose anything material by our superior self-control and that virtue will have its reward in something hard and metallic and negotiable. Do the Olympians require war? Come these modern heralds to acclaim for patriotism, sacrifice and the venerable, haggard word *Liberty* is dragged in by the ears. It is also indicated that we are not only privileged to shed our blood by joining the colors, but that if we don't do so in a hurry we may not have the choice of whether the game is to be played on the home grounds or not. What is the result? The same voices that sang "I Did Not Raise My Boy To Be A Soldier" grow hoarse shouting, "America, Here's My Boy."

But cries of war and peace are exceptional. Elections are regular. What become of campaign promises after election? "*Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan!*"

At this point it becomes necessary to assert that I am not pleading for a change in the social order. Certain though it be that the real rulers are over-greedy and blundering and ignorant, I cannot see what would be gained by substituting the more ignorant, the more slavish. It is doubtful whether you would dismiss an incompetent executive of a corporation to put his office boy in his place. Similarly those now in power rule probably more efficiently

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

— 24 —  
 I am considerably more than is commonly  
 supposed. In truth I am pleading for  
 the present order. I am simply trying to  
 show that the numberless officials, bosses,  
 and grand, politicians and all  
 the hierarchy are simply the lackeys  
 of a few men, hired to soothe the public's  
 vanity and paid out of this same public's  
 pocket. I am trying to show that the  
 present internal government of a democ-  
 racy is the same as that of an autocracy  
 or monarchy or empire, and that for our  
 vanity we maintain a more gorgeous  
 train of parasites than any king or em-  
 peror. Finally, that demagogues cost  
 more than diadems, flattery far more  
 than ermine, that the upkeep of poli-  
 ticians far and away surpasses the up-  
 keep of palaces. Perhaps we get our  
 fair exchange in complacency, but make  
 no mistake—everything is paid for and  
 it is you that pay.

It is only in the microscope that our  
 own lives look so big.—Schopenhauer.



## THE SHORT STORY

THE *rara avis* in the realm of letters  
 is beyond doubt the short story.

Despite the double fact that every  
 fresh water college in America offers a  
 "short story course" to the student as-  
 pirant and that the great commercial  
 weeklies and monthlies literally get  
 down on their knees and beg for them,  
 tendering bribes almost tempting  
 enough to lure a corporation lawyer  
 away from his portfolios, the good short  
 story remains unwritten.

One popular weekly, we are told, pays  
 a minimum of five cents the word for a  
 short story. In a case where the writer  
 has attained a vogue, the compensation  
 is at ten cents the word, and sometimes  
 more. When we consider that the mod-  
 ern story varies in length from thirty-  
 five hundred to twelve thousand words  
 this "compensation" is not entirely to  
 be despised. Poor Poe, now living  
 would reap a nice harvest with his aver-  
 age tale of ten thousand little etymons.  
 Ten or twenty dollars per was the best  
 he received. Suppose today some for-  
 tunate bibliophile should run across, in  
 his browsing, an undiscovered MS of  
 the Rev. Whipple's famous protégé,  
 what sum think you, would it command  
 in the MSS mart?

Henry James' "The Liar," a master-  
 piece in the art, contains no less than  
 twenty thousand words; Kipling's "The  
 Man Who Would Be King," over thirty-  
 seven thousand; Hawthorne's "Gentle  
 Boy" twelve thousand; Stevenson's  
 "Will o' the Mill" eleven thousand five  
 hundred, and so on down the line. But  
 be warned, young Tyro, the big maga-  
 zines will have none of this today. Save  
 an occasional "Novelette, complete in  
 this issue," five or six thousand words  
 is maximum.

And yet, and yet—though all over  
 these great United States, in almost  
 every by-street of almost every hamlet,  
 there lurk horn-rim spectacled lads and  
 slightly aging spinster ladies, infected  
 with the virus, *cacoethes scribendi*, we  
 are producing nothing noteworthy in  
 this field.

Poets and critics there are a-plenty.  
 Pianists, painters, prophets and politi-  
 cians abound. Barbers, baseball players



and bank presidents are, as ever, in sufficient numbers. Where are our raconteurs?

During the last six months of arduous (?) labor, the Editors of this "jaunty little journal" have received an average of no less than two short stories per diem. Notwithstanding our newness and isolation they pour in upon us from all parts of *terra America*—Seattle, Bangor, Cheyenne, Mattewan, Biloxi, Pensacola, Kansas City, Baton Rouge, Cincinnati, Bogalusa, Chicago and Manhattan—for the most part neatly typed, forty-five hundred to six thousand word *contes pathétiques* submitted by John and Mary (better Lionel and Ethelyn) This and That, "at usual rates, serial rights only." Out of this thesauric mine of material, upwards of three hundred "valiant verbirosities," what have we found? One rather dreary oriental affair by a well-known writer who "gets his price" so he informs us, but as a concession to our enterprise proffers his ware to us at the ridiculously low rate of five hundred American eagles; one idealistic bit of fantasy by a young woman who has done some nice work, but in this instance must have been suffering from a slight attack of *cerebralitis*; and one little forty-five hundred word first attempt (a good one at that) which we printed in our last issue.

Please, gentle contributors, leave off for a fortnight your making of pretty lyrics, facile *feuilletons*, satirical essays, pungent paragraphs and sophisticated abstractions in the "modern" manner. Surprise us the next time, if you will, with a good, tingling yarn.

## THE DOMINANT PETTICOAT

**B**RITISHER, continental and even the heathen Chinese have come to this country and politely gone home and entertained the natives with accounts of America as a land governed by its females. They represent us men as tied to the apron strings, first of our mothers, then of our wives, and lastly our daughters. In our opinion these writers are laughing with the same horrible laughter of the slightly wounded man for his more mutilated comrades. The world is, indeed, ruled by women.

Nevertheless, the citadel of this woman sovereignty is our fair land. Ask any mother about her offspring and she will tell you that the little girls are tractable and "sweet," the little boys wild and unmanageable. The girl grows up, husbanding her energy. The boy runs through his. At twenty-five he is a spent man, and any woman can lead him around by a ring through his nose.

Observe the ordinary husband. In three years what has he become? A beef-steak buyer, a lawn mower, a victrola winder. As docile and tame a creature as a Holstein cow.

The domination of the "long-haired, knock-kneed sex" is everywhere apparent. Does it come to a question of the "suppression of vice?" Well, perhaps we men may know the futility of it, but suppose we went home and said so. We would not only get abuse, but be regarded with suspicion all the days of our lives.

What is prohibition but the female mind? A well-known critic said some place that men had invented a more

powerful passion than the love of women, that of ethyl alcohol. The women knew this to be true and acted accordingly. Fiddlesticks, I say, to this talk of anti-saloon men having engineered prohibition. It was the girls who put the taboo on *spiritus frumenti*. Throw a brick out of the window and you will hit an anti-prohibitionist, but put the matter to a vote and prohibition will be re-indorsed as sure as your name is Mrs. Jack Robinson's husband.

Walk through the shopping district of any American city and you will find twenty shops displaying silks and fripperies to one of boots and tobacco. Ask your book seller who buys his books. Ask your theatrical producer on whom the success of his play depends; the popular magazine editor or the advertising man which sex he caters to.

Shades of Mary Wolstonecraft, "women's rights" forsooth! They have the vote. Subtly they run the country. Our lives are mortgaged to them. They have already gone the bees one better, for we are not only used as repopulators like the drone, but we also play the role of the worker.

Beaten, baffled, befuddled, there still remains one thing for us men to do—smile. Look at your neighbor, your brother, your father, you brother-in-law, and lastly, look at yourself in the mirror—and smile.

Admirable may be the wise woman—but she is an owl.—*From the Chinese.*

## CLASSIC EMOTIONS

HOW few of us look with a naive eye upon time-accepted works of art. Gelded mentally and spiritually by parson, parent and pedant long before we are out of knee-breeches, we appraise mule-like with the drove.

In early youth, the most impressionable period of our lives, we are helplessly victimized by professional counsel and parental benevolence. We are told everything. Our opinions formed, our ideas controlled, our very dreams expurgated by the guiding hand of parent and professor. All things we are taught from the lips of senility. This is right and that is wrong. This work good and that one bad. We are told that Raphael was the greatest painter, and the Sistine Madonna his masterpiece; that Tennyson was a poet and his *Idylls of the King* "wonderful"; that Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a "magnificent" opus; that a perfunctory appreciation of this book and that play, this picture and that opera, stamps you at once as a person of refinement and culture.

I have done the galleries of Europe, as, peradventure, have you. I have also done to a finish the stage, operatic and otherwise. I have done, further, my father's and many another's libraries. Several times in early childhood I have read myself ill abed, but not until, perhaps, yesterday have I "done" anything with a naive eye. The trick is this if you care to learn: forget all you have been taught and told, all books, all philosophies, all opinions, then strip

naked (mentally, of course) and burn or freeze willynilly.

After reading Walter Pater's essay on Leonardo da Vinci I could hardly wait to get my first look at Dame Lisa. On entering the Louvre I fairly rushed to the picture. Jehovah, what a disappointment! Something must be wrong, something must be lacking in me. Too young perhaps to appreciate its subtlety and beauty. My indifference was astounding. This was eight years ago. I have since learned and unlearned much, but this in particular, that one's individual reaction to a thing is all that argues. What do I care if Dickens is counted a great writer? He bores me. I prefer Balzac. The Venus de Milo is supposed to fire one with an appreciation of classic beauty. My impression was the same as it would have been had

I gazed upon the nude effigy of my wife's laundress. Madame Tetrazini's vocal acrobatics fail to evoke in me the customary thrill. I incline towards John McCormack. Chesterton and Wells to me, at least, are tedious. Why hide the fact that Ring Lardner intrigues me more than E. V. Lucas?

If you, my friend, prefer Harrison Fisher's ladies to those of Aubrey Beardsley; Gene Stratton Porter's novels to Edith Wharton's; Bud Scott's Jazz Orchestra to the Boston Symphony, why, simple say so.

Let us try, if we can, to put away attitudes, silly affectations. They belong to our mid-Victorian progenitors. Pretense and superficiality are, or should be, out of place to-day. The hour of the honest clod is at hand, he of the naive eye.

Pox on't, why should I disparage my parts by thinking what to say? None but dull rogues think; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expenses; while your block-heads, like poor needy scoundrels, are forced to examine their stock and forecast the charges of the day.—*Congreve's Double Dealer*.

# Body's Blood

By ARTHUR SYMONS.

And if I love you more than my own Soul  
Then must you die—and I shall never die  
Until I reach you, who have loved you so  
'That life and death are little more than dreams  
And night-vigils and visitings from God.  
You loved me, lied to me, left me. What's a bride  
That ought to have been brideless? For you were  
A girl that never should have married; one  
So much more wonderful than I imagined  
Anyone could be: made of no virgin soil,  
But veritable virgin when I met you,  
Before I made you woman. And that's over  
As all such things have always been and shall be  
In this world and the next. You know I might  
Just chance to met you, at some street-corner  
Under the glaring lights, in Leicester Square,  
Where you and I came out of the Empire. There  
How well we know the stage-door, you and I,  
And how you changed your houses; Howland Street  
Where Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud lived  
Some storm-tossed years of intense passion and pain  
And love and hatred. There I hated you  
And there I loved you. If Verlaine had met you  
What songs he would have written! Not like mine,  
That were my veritable blood, my naked self,  
My body and my soul. All these I laid  
One after another before you, and you trod  
With delicate feet that never could have hurt me,  
As birds might, on my body and on my soul,  
And on my body's blood. God's cruel, Dear;  
And have I not been crueler than God?



# The Tooth

By CHARLES J. FINGER.

OUT here we have some good company. There are men from the neighboring university who come so on, but last Sunday the center of to visit, to talk, to look at the books and interest was the tooth that Sheehan, in a jocose spirit, had bedded on a piece of black velvet and set in the cigar ash tray. Even the Y. M. C. A. secretary deigned to examine it with a passing show of interest, saying, sorrowfully as he laid it in its place, "Everything was so large in those days"—the exact period to which he referred being no doubt the cosmical equivalent of the familiar historical epoch, "the olden time." Privately, we all consider him an ass and a boulder, but he has nothing to do with the story, and what he said relative to the size of the thing is mentioned to set you straight. It is not really so large. It is less than an inch wide. Its rarity is the interesting thing. The Y. M. C. A. man, like many more, gets a kind of false historical perspective and conjures up a distorted geological picture which really quite reverses the facts as to the relative size of animals in the past and the present.

This is how I came to have the tooth. When *Current Opinion* reprinted that tale of the "Lizard God," the editor put a little inset in the middle of the page and my address was given. Through that, Mr. Leaf found me.

A telegram heralded his coming, and lucky it was that it did, for I was all

prepared to take a trip to Little Rock. The message was enigmatic, and left grounds for speculation. It read:

*"Am coming to ask question Monday on Brazil."*—H. H. Leaf.

Living in the country, I did not get it until Monday, when the R. F. D. man brought it, though it should have reached me on Saturday had I had a 'phone. So it fell out that Leaf himself came hard on the heels of his wire. He impressed me at first as being surly and reticent, and I could not keep my eyes from that queer, ironic face of his.

He had a copy of the magazine, and, after a mere nod and laconic greeting, he thrust it at me open at the page on which the story ended. I offered him a seat and we regarded one another in silence for a space. Evidently we were summing one another up, a habit men get into who have lived long in the wilds.

"Any foundation?" he asked. "Or is it just mere lies and fantastic work?"

I assured him that there was foundation and a very strong one, for I was personally acquainted with Rounds, and that the only part which was fanciful, was the character of the museum curator, and even he was drawn from life, though the incident of the meeting did not occur exactly as pictured. "Otherwise," said I, "the tale is true as I heard it." I must have seemed impatiently affable and with cause, for I

had much to do, and besides, I had an article from the pen of Hervey in which he had mentioned Richard Jeffries, and I had promised myself to polish up on that neglected writer.

Mr. Leaf sat in silence, thinking, then suddenly rose from his chair and placed his left foot in the seat of it, stuck his right elbow on the desk and propped his chin on his fist. "I'm glad to know that much," he said. "It's as well to know. In a way you gave a wrong impression as to the size of the beast. I don't mean the thing that killed this fellow what's-his-name, but the stone thing. This." He returned to the erect position and turned over a page or two of the magazine, then thrust a gnarled forefinger at a passage on page 628, right-hand column near the top. I noticed that his nails were all horribly broken and his hands leather like. "Of course, if you think I'm lying—" he said, and stopped suddenly and began pulling at his mustache.

I told him that I knew well enough what it was to be disbelieved, so well indeed, that half of what I had seen and had experienced would never see the light of print. We grew a little discursive then on the subject of human credence. It is not necessary to repeat what we talked about, but I recall hinting at a few things, things that the untraveled call incongruities and impossibilities and so dismiss forthright. He nodded sympathetically, and, for a while we drifted conversationally and our talk was a macedoine of tautologies, hesitation and slang. You know how it is when men talk freely. We were reminiscent. The name of W. H. Hudson came up, and that of Cunninghame Gra-

hame, too, whom Leaf had once met in Peru. So we fell to talking of odd things, comparing notes and so on. He, I remember, mentioned the case of the sailor, a deck hand on a sailing ship rounding the Horn, whose broken leg had gangrened. The incident is well enough known to all who have hung around Chilean seaport towns. The ship's cook amputated the leg with a common meat saw and carving knife, and the man is alive and well to-day, a hard drinker who runs a *boliche* in Antofagasta. I countered with the story of the man through whose chest a marlin spike dropped from aloft had passed. He lived to a good old age. Such things we talked of, smoking furiously the while, so that when he fell to his tale of the Swamp country he spoke from behind a blue, whirling cloud.

"I could show you exactly where Rounds was," he said. "You don't happen to have a map around, do you? I could lay my finger on the place. It interested me. That old bitch too. There's lots of 'em. Old hags they are, like those vultures in a little town who know of all the scandals and the family skeletons and trade on the knowledge. Everyone gets scared of 'em.

"I'd been with the Soni tribe nigh on ten months myself, and heard about the Tlingas there. I quit the Sonis though because they got something into their heads, though what, you can't tell. Maybe they got suspicious somehow. I kind of think though, that they wanted to get my head for keeps. You know, as a trophy—dry it they would until it was shriveled, then deck it up with bright colored feathers. Another thing was that the wife I had, had twins, and that's a

disgrace. Anyway, there were whisperings. They'd chatter together and whisper, squatted on their hams and looking at me sideways and it got to be pretty rotten, especially at night. I'd feel their clawy hands about me and all that sort of thing. Sometimes I'd see a shadowy form prowling about, clumsily, see them moving between the tree trunks. They were playing at their invisible devil. So I left 'em and went South and a tough trip it was. Stagnant rivers there are, rotting in dank valleys, and plants and ferns, great things, gray like and ghostly. It got worse the further I went. And the vines—vines like cobwebs loosely hanging, and real spiders too—monstrous beasts.

. . . and that reminds me. When I first saw the white snake, a word or two came to me and kept ringing in my ears. Funny notion it was. Kept time as I walked. 'Hate maddened eye.' That was it. Hate maddened eye. I thought of it when I first saw the white snake. A fat, softish thing it was, slow moving and whitish gray and if there wasn't hate in its eye, I don't know what hate is. Seemed to be harmless though. It was a sickening business to get over the flat where they were thick. They were all about and no more moved out of the way than penguins move. And once, I stepped on one and it—ugh!

"When I hit the swamp country, I had to strike west. Man, down there the air was heavy and still—damp heavy, so beastly thick heavy you could hardly breathe. 'Twas like trying to breathe steam. You couldn't get air at all. Hot as the bars of hell too, and your sweat wouldn't evaporate. This stream I'd been following split into two,

one part going swampward and the other sank into a kind of gorge where the banks were precipices. The forest grew thicker and thicker and the trees were different to anything I'd ever seen. Queer shaped leaves they were, kidney shaped and silverish in color. Kind of stuff like oil there was a plenty, so some day there'll be a clearing up down there. There was an evil moon that night and everything was whitish. Rotten fix to be in and I began to think I'd never get out of the damned place, and that God Himself had forgotten me. You know how it is sometimes. Hell on earth." He moved his hand a little sweeping motion to illustrate.

"Silence and solitude there was. A beastly world. Things about me seemed filthy, vague, monstrous and—by God the silence pained. One thing I saw that gave me a scare. I almost stepped on it. It was more like a great toad than anything, and not that either. An oily looking thing. There it was in the middle of a little pool and I thought it was a rock and started to take it in my stride to get across. Like a flash I recognized it as a living creature just as I was about to step on it, so that I changed my step and my foot went in just beside it. Gosh, man, it didn't move and I almost fell on it. I even touched it as I stumbled and it was soft, and gave, like wet leather. I saw it plain, for a shaft of moon struck it and it was the height of my knee out of the pool. Big eyes like a cow. But the stench of it. Almost I vomited as I ran, though I couldn't help looking behind me now and then for I feared the thing might leap on my back and I fancied it hanging to me—a clammy lump. You know I

couldn't go fast at all on account of the matted tangle about. When I stopped from sheer exhaustion my heart thumped so that I feared unseen things might hear the beat of it. It was so still there."

Mr. Leaf hesitated a little and his expression was perplexed and as if he were on his guard. Again there was that half-nervous pulling at his mustache.

"And the eels—white eels," he went on after a little while. "It struck me chill to see them. Great eels and other nameless things, deformed and pale that stared in silence. Everything stared. Nothing made a sound. No breeze of course and where there was water, it was black and staring. At one place there were great ribs drowned in mud, great flattish ribs that had never seen sunlight, and in and about them were those eels. It was a little beyond that that I saw the lizards I'm telling you of . . ."

It was at that point of the tale that W. H. Gibson came in, and of course the tale ceased. I knew it would if for no other reason than that Leaf was so suspicious. He had no means of knowing Gibson and as I knew him, of trusting him as a true scientist and a man not given to foolish condemnation. Gibson, I think, is the very re-incarnation of Henry David Thoreau. Exact, patient, methodical, I would trust him implicitly. If he told me to close my eyes and cross a crowded street because it was safe in his estimation, I'd take him at his word.

But Leaf rose to leave and it was apparent that he was moody. For all that, his eyes were fixed on Gibson and, I fancied, burnt a scorching fire of ques-

tions. It came to me that Leaf was more than half inclined to set Gibson down as a straight man and when W. H. set on the desk a couple of little specimen bottles, Leaf looked relieved. The bottles were empty, but each had a little disk of paper at the bottom and below that, a sprinkling of brownish powder.

"They are for Hubert," Gibson said. "He's promised to collect some beetles for me. And here's the book his brother Charles wanted. I can't stay long." He placed the book, a large leather bound volume on the desk.

"Don't rush off Leaf," I said, noticing that he was fidgeting. "I think you'll understand Gibson all right. He knows things, and—"

"If I'm interrupting—" Gibson began, making as if to go.

Then I played my card, for I wanted Gibson to hear. "Not at all," I said. "Mr. Leaf is a South American traveler and we were talking of things." It was my desperate effort to get them *en rapport*.

Leaf stood irresolutely, fluttering the pages of the big book idly.

"That's for the lad who collects things," Gibson explained, nodding at the book.

Leaf did not seem to hear. He was standing with the book open, tracing a diagram. Then his finger went across the page to the legend opposite. "Figure five," he muttered, reading. Then slowly, "One-twelfth the natural size." Gibson looked across interested. "That'd make it about six inches. And three toes. Some with four."

"Fossils," interpolated Gibson, "Found in the Connecticut limestone."

There fell a silence broken only by the



buzzing of a clumsy fly and a faint rustling as a breeze stirred. Leaf passed his tongue over his lips then his hand went up to his mustache.

"That's the kind of tracks I saw before I came on the other beast," said Leaf with decision. "The same. No doubt of it. I'd know them as I know a horses tracks from a dog's. They were in the same place—many of them. Many other tracks too. A great hollow place it was—a kind of basin. The worst was a foot mark, different to this about a yard square. I saw the beast. Sixty feet long it was with a body like a rhinoceros only far bigger, and a long neck and little head. Only one I saw that had ridges along its back. But the other, the thing that makes these tracks, there were dozens of them and all sizes. I saw one that was twenty feet or so. It had a tail that dragged, like a kangaroo, but its head was like that stone thing in your story. Two little forelegs it had. Once or twice they came at me. Came at me with neck stretched out and mouth open. Scared? Well . . . But each time the thing stopped soon. Took no more notice. But the stink of it."

Leaf seemed to be forcing himself to go on. His voice was very low. He made a motion to continue, but stopped abruptly.

"How long were you there?" asked Gibson.

"I kept my watch wound," answered Leaf, automatically taking out his Ingersoll and winding it. "A little over 36 hours. I coasted along the edge of the place you know."

"And you had little light, I under-

stand!" Gibson was questioning with eager interest.

"At night there was a full moon. I saw it between rifts of clouds. In the day time I saw no sun. You know it was more like steam laden air down there. In day time there was nothing but a thick haze. You see, it was like a basin in the hills. I told you that, and when I came to the edge of it, and after I had climbed out, and looked back into that hole, it was all like looking into the crater of a volcano. The steam hid it. Misty, all misty. It was like looking down on thick clouds from a mountain top."

Leaf half shivered as he spoke, then with an abrupt transition to something like cheerfulness he said, "It was a comfortable old world I thought, when I got back to the things I knew. Trees and all that, and it seemed impossible that I was chased by one of those long-necked things a few hours before. Yet, it was queer, when I found that they did not touch me, I was only doubtful, as a child might be that had fear of a cow, if you get me. And look here."

He put his hand in his pants pocket and brought forth a strangely shaped bone, not a fossil, which he laid on the desk. It was about an inch across and shaped roughly like an arrow head, but without the barbs. Gibson took it, examining it curiously. Then he turned to the big book and found one of the plates, rejected it and found another. By the side of the picture he placed the bone and the three of us looked at it with vast interest. It was easy to see that they matched perfectly.

"I got that after I left the place," Leaf said, and passed his hand over his

forehead wearily. You know, the first thing that interested me was a humming bird. It was good to see. It was good to hear. It was good to be in a world of noise and of light again, I can tell you. There was a kind of low confusion of hills and I hadn't wandered an hour, when I came across a skeleton of one of those things—the long necked ones that chased me."

"A Dinosaur, perhaps," interpreted Gibson. Leaf nodded.

"Lord knows how it got there. It was a skeleton you know, not a fossil, and the Indians had tales of when it was alive. Not that they saw it, of course, but their fathers, perhaps. They were full of tales about big beasts that came up now and again. Chance I guess, as a flying fish falls on the deck of a ship, or as once I saw a sea gull in the public square in Cleveland, Ohio. For the matter of that, it was no more strange than that I should have chanced down there when you come to think of it, or as the body of a man may find its way to the deeps of the sea. Anyway, there's the tooth and the people are full of tradition. Scare gods, you know.

"I was picked up by a fellow, half Indian, half negro—a fellow full of a wheezy kind of jocosity. He led me to

the village, a village of yellow mud with eyeless windows and gaping doors. And that's about all."

\* \* \*

The tale came to an end as abruptly as that and it is idle to relate the rest of our conversation. It was scattering. Gibson made a half attempt to persuade Leaf to go to the University with him, but gave it up seeing how unwelcome the suggestion was. Leaf stayed that night with me and, after the children had gone to bed, we sat up long talking about women and adventure. He left early the following morning and walked to town, a dusty, sturdy, lonely looking figure.

The following Sunday, Buckhardt, the psychologist pooh-poohed the whole thing and talked of sub-consciousness and submerged memories and the Y. M. C. A. secretary feebly sided with him. But Gibson, turning his back on the latter flashed the tooth at Buckhardt, saying "But he didn't dream that."

Certainly, the presence of that is the main thing. I have it before me as I write, and it is in an ordinary wine glass placed where Sheehan gently dropped it. As its base sits in the little hollow at the bottom, its upper edge touches almost exactly the rim.

Optimism is the shield of wtlings: pessimism the sword of the wise.

# The Fisherman

By EMMY VERONICA SANDERS.

I met an uncouth Fisherman.  
Streamwards in the pale dawn he strode,  
Plowing the silence that hung soft  
And heavy on the winding road.

He muttered strangely as he went,  
A giant basket on his back.  
No other fisherman that came  
To follow in his lonely track.

Pausing he dug from magic soil  
There in the chill gray morning mist  
A shimmering bait of little words  
Of opal, silver, amethyst.

His brooding eyes were deep and cold.  
The hand that clutched the rod seemed strong.  
Rigid he stood, with grim set mouth,  
Like a stone statue all day long.

Watching the bait bob up and down  
The turbid waves of his desire.  
Slowly the silent hours sailed by  
On wings of shadow and of fire.

His brow, like a great jutting rock,  
Cast a far blackness on the stream  
As from its shifting bottomsands  
He lured the image of a dream.

He hauled it with the slender rod  
Up to the surface cautiously.  
It lay there spread before his feet  
Like a caught salmon by a tree.

And then he smiled a slow faint smile,  
So stiff and still—a smile of stone.  
And vanished in the falling dusk  
With deepset brooding eyes—alone.

# Sabotaging American Literature

By LLEWELLYN JONES.

THE domination of New England and New York over American culture which the *Double Dealer* means to challenge is not only a domination of a sectional character, but one which attempts to dictate the center of American culture and even what that culture itself shall be. And the men behind this attempt are determined that rigid Puritanism, thrown out of religion—for religion is tending to become romantic—shall find a new abode in American letters. The idea is ingenious, for when it comes to reside in letters Puritanism can fortify its position by the appeal to the classics. It can deride romanticism as something psychologically invalid and point to Rousseau as an awful example—which is what Professor Irving Babbitt does. It can point with alarm to social unrest and tell us that only in authority can we find salvation—which is what Paul Elmer More does. It can criticise contemporary authors by the standard of a mid-Victorian old maid—which is the job of Professor Stuart Pratt Sherman. And through the mouths of lesser disciples of these men it can discredit all cultural performances which do not conform to the standard, or suppress the news of their existence—as may be well seen in the last two volumes of the "Cambridge History of American Literature," which is edited solely by these gentlemen—it is edited by fair Ph. D.'s, and in all its four volumes only one

article is contributed by a creative writer—one on aboriginal literature by Mary Austin.

All this is done, of course, in the name of humanism, and we may begin by showing that this so-called humanism is a purely American product. For the one other great democracy in which humanism has been an ideal is England. And typical of the humanist ideal in England is the work of Gilbert Murray and his associates who have made all their Greek lore accessible to the man in the street, who has responded in a measure far beyond anything that we can imagine American popular audiences doing. Typical, too, is the spectacle of Robert Bridges, poet laureate and aristocrat in all that pertains to art and life, addressing a British "workers' educational alliance" on "The Necessity of Poetry"—and being listened to by his audience. Then such English humanists as John W. Mackail have always recognized the autonomy of aesthetics. When Mackail criticizes poetry—as he has done from the chair of poetry in Oxford, a chair held for five years at a time, and now occupied by Professor Ker—he criticises it as an art, not as a mere criticism of life or ethical discipline.

How different it is in America. Our self-styled humanists are either dry-as-dust or they gain what liveliness their pages have by vindictiveness which even runs to misrepresentation. As the art



impulse springs from the emotional and is apt to be associated with a certain gusto for life that scoffs at academicism they are implacably against it in any form except the neo-classical—where it is strictly subordinated to ethical imperatives.

Just what absurdities this lands them into and what injustices to contemporary as well as older writers spring from the attitude I shall now proceed to show by actual example.

Probably the one doctrine of art which has commanded the general assent of European and English aestheticians is that of the Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce. Art, he tells us is lyrical intuition or expression. It springs from a human faculty which is sub-logical in the sense that it gives logic its raw materials. For that reason the man who applies logical categories to art, who tries to work things out in cold blood will only produce an imitation art. And because any work of art is the expression of an original intuition every work is unique, has its own perfection, and cannot be compared with other works. For classifications are logical and come after the event. After Shakespeare has written twenty plays we can say that ten of them are tragedies and ten comedies; but that is a rough method of pigeon-holing, simply for convenience. It does not mean that Shakespeare had to obey certain laws every time he wrote a tragedy, on penalty of having his play called a bastard. And Shakespeare himself has poked fun at the classifiers of drama into "genres."

Now it is obvious that the doctrine of Croce is one of liberation. It tells the artist to go ahead, to record his intuitions, and not to be troubled by the

critics who judge him by ethical or other external standards. On the other hand, says Croce, the real critic is he who, in taste, reconceives what was uttered by genius. He interprets through sympathy. The reader who appreciates a poem is not only, then, a critic, but reader and critic, insofar as they enter into the artist's intuition and make it their own, are, for that moment, at one with the artist.

The reader who is unacquainted with Croce at first hand may find his aesthetics brilliantly explained in Joel Elias Spingarn's "Creative Criticism," (whose work, by the way, is pointedly ignored in the Cambridge History of American literature.) Of that book Professor Mackail, mentioned above, said:

"I have seldom had the pleasure of reading so much important truth brought together into so compact a form as in this essay." . . .

Our American critic, Professor Babbitt, however, had a slightly different reaction:

"Affirmations repugnant to the most elementary commonsense. Emancipation of the imagination from any allegiance to standards. Not much is left of the values of civilized life when he has finished enumerating the things that must be thrown overboard."—*New York Nation*.

Surely the language of a man who is slightly rattled. Our American way with Croce, however, is simple. We label him a "decadent."

Of course, in common parlance, the word decadent has sinister connotations. Usually it means immoral; when applied to art it means the art of Oscar Wilde—in the popular imagination, that

is. It certainly means something unhealthy. How, then, can it be applied to Croce, whose philosophy is idealistic, intellectual, open, and optimistic?

The particular trick which makes it possible was turned by a humbler follower of the Babbitt-Sherman-More school, one Professor Gass of Nebraska. In an article which appeared some years ago in the *Mid-West Quarterly*, Professor Gass laid down the astounding series of propositions that beauty was an adjunct of physical things only; that words were meant to express ideas; that as the substitution of what was only a means, for what was an end was decadent (as it would be decadent to make taste an end in itself instead of an adjunct to nourishment in food) so a poet who used words to express beauty instead of ideas was decadent. And then, of all possible examples, he chose Wordsworth. Wordsworth had written:

" . . . I saw a crowd,  
A host of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze."

And he comments that to make such imagery a thing of importance for its own sake is to be guilty of decadence—and that Wordsworth is no guilty.

Well, if Wordsworth is a decadent, Croce can well afford to be one too. But one sees the unjust prejudice that is raised.

In the case of Stuart Pratt Sherman this practice of raising prejudice comes perilously near plain misrepresentation. Here is a case in point. In George Moore's "Brook Kerith" the artist uses for his artistic purposes the well-known legend that Jesus did not die on the

cross, but was taken down while still alive and nursed back to health. Mr. Moore's artistic problem is to show the after-life of Jesus and the effect upon him of the failure of his mission. Of course, the experience on the cross involved a tremendous shock, and the getting over the shock and picking up the particular thread of life which he is to follow thenceforth is something quite difficult to delineate. Mr. Moore wishes to get Jesus back to the hills as a shepherd where he will have ample time and quiet to rethink his problem. The manner in which he contrives the turning point is very adroit. One day we see Jesus just beginning to do what is colloquially known as "sitting up and taking notice." And Joseph of Arimathea who is caring for Jesus is told to encourage him to think of mundane things, so:

" . . . seeing that Jesus had called the puppies to him and was making himself their playmate, he asked him if he were fond of dogs; whereupon Jesus began to praise the bitch, saying she was of better breeding than her puppies, and that when she came on heat again she should be sent to a pure Thracian like herself. Joseph asked, not because he was interested in dog-breeding, but to make talk, if the puppies were mongrels. . . ."

Here, obviously, is the turning point in Jesus' interests that will now go back to his earlier work of shepherding—the dog being the shepherd's most important aid.

But in his critique of George Moore, Professor Sherman actually has the impudence to quote that passage, and to explain it as Mr. Moore's despairing effort to get at least some sex interest into his story! And yet Professor Sherman

manages to live by and teach in a university which has a large agricultural experimental station with breeding going on all the time!

Many other examples could be quoted of misrepresentation of art and artists by these men, but the concluding volumes of the Cambridge History of American literature afford the more serious, as that work is addressed to posterity as well as to the present generation. The editors of these volumes could in accordance with tradition have ended them at some such period as 1880, but they have chosen to bring them down to date. That being so it is incumbent upon them to mention all the notable writers who are wielding influence upon present-day literature. That they attempt to bring their history right down to 1920 is shown by the fact that they comment upon "The Education of Henry Adams."

Considering the fact that the contemporary situation is touched on at all points, we should expect to see some mention of the work in criticism of H. L. Mencken—whom, although he is an American citizen born, Professor Sherman referred to during the war period as "Herr Mencken." But in this book he is not even mentioned as Herr Mencken. He is omitted altogether. And although the fields of economics and philosophy are covered up to date there is not a word in this history about the unique work in economics and sociology of Professor Thorstein Veblen—for he,

too, is among the liberators, and hence anathema. And in the consideration of the new poetry movement the reader is referred for specimens of the work of the moderns—Amy Lowell, Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, etc.,—solely to Mr. Braithwaite's annual anthologies, which are not at all, as a matter of fact, representative, while never a word is devoted to *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* which actually discovered many of the men whom Braithwaite subsequently scissored for his annual collections.

It is a fact that men of the stamp we have mentioned are trying to make art and literature in America a close corporation in which only "the good" may have a share. When we consider that their published writings represent also the repressive influence which they have been enabled to wield over their university classes we may imagine the harm they have done to students with imagination to be stifled and emotions to be diverted into sterile channels. The pity is not only that in many cases they will succeed but that in other cases revolt against them is unintelligent and wastes itself by becoming revolt against all scholarly and academic standards. Between this professorial camp and the camp of *The Little Review* and other extreme magazines the youthful poet and artist in America seems to be pulled in two directions—in one to become a fossil; in the other a freak. Perhaps the *Double Dealer* will be a half-way house.

## Dining Alone

By MITCHELL DAWSON.

He dined at the long table of the past;  
The ancient napery was drab and frayed;  
An orchestra of feeble echoes played  
And in the corner stood a plaster cast  
Of his young love with cracked and peeling face.  
He nibbled at old smiles and passionate words,  
But souring time had turned them into curds,  
So that he chewed old insults in their place.

When death, the waiter, brought a finger bowl,  
He rose as from a nauseating fast  
And took from the deep pocket of his soul  
A woman's kiss to give death for a tip,  
Who held the door for him thru which to slip  
Bowed out into oblivion at last.

## Black Tambourine

By HART CRANE.

The interests of a black man in a cellar  
Mark an old judgment on the world.  
Gnats toss in the shadow of a bottle,  
And a roach spans a crevice in the floor.

Aesop, driven to pondering, found  
Heaven with the tortoise and the hare:  
Fox brush and sow ear top his grave,  
And mingle incantations on the air.

The black man, forlorn, in the cellar,  
Wanders in some mid-kingdom, dark, that lies  
Between his tambourine, stuck on the wall,  
And, in Africa, a carcass quick with flies.



# tory o etto

By LEOPOLDT KOMPERT.

(Translated by Lafcadio Hearn)

IT was night; silence reigned throughout the city;—suddenly the *Schulklopper* fancied he heard the wooden mallet, with which morning and evening he convoked the faithful to the Synagogue, oscillate gently as if rising and falling to itself. "That mallet will not let me slumber," he said to his daughter, who also heard the faint and ghostly sounds. "Some one in the street is dying," she answered, shuddering; and almost immediately after cried out in a fit of sudden terror, "*Schmah, Israel*; (Harken, O Israel!) it must be the Rabbi."

Almost at the same instant the movements of the mallet ceased; but without some one knocked violently upon his window, and a voice was heard crying aloud: "Rise and knock at the doors and call the people to the synagogue; the *Thillim* (psalms) must be said; for the Rabbi is dying." Then in the middle of the silent night were heard at every door the three well-known strokes of the mallet. With a shudder which seemed to sink to the very bottom of her soul, the daughter of the *Schulklopper* heard her father's footsteps passing from house to house. And when the last blow upon the last door of the street had ceased to re-echo, she said to herself: "Even now the Rabbi must be in his death agony." And she could not help shedding bitter tears.

But the recitation of the *Thillim* re-

tained the soul of the Rabbi at the moment it was about to take flight, although the shadows of death had not yet vanished from his chamber. As morning approached he became worse, and then the *Bochrim* (disciples) lamented with a greater lamentation. Wax and wick were procured; the stature of the sick man was measured, and upon this measurement a gigantic waxen taper was made. The taper was wrapped in a shroud and borne to the cemetery, where it was buried beside the dead. But in spite of all it would soon be necessary to remember the same length of the Rabbi's body for the measurement of a coffin. "O God, Almighty God!" cried the *Bochrim*,—"what can we do that the life of our Rabbi may be preserved?"

"Come!" cried a disciple, "let us collect the years for him!—perchance God will hearken to us." A *Bocher* (disciple) went forthwith from house to house with a paper in his hand, upon which each one wrote down the number of years, weeks, or days of his own life which he was willing to sacrifice for the dying Rabbi. The daughter of the *Schulklopper* was standing without her door just at the moment that the *Bocher* passed with his paper. "And thou!" he said, speaking to her,—"wilt thou give nothing for the Rabbi?" "My life!—my whole life will I give for him!" she sobbed out. "Must I write that

down?" "Write! write!" Therefore, the *Bocher* wrote down: "The life of Hannele."

From the same hour the Rabbi was healed, and the next day a young body was laid in the cemetery. It was the daughter of the *Schulklopper*.

As easily as the young girl had devoted herself to death, even so easily did the Rabbi efface her name from the book of the living. During the first days of his convalescence the Rabbi was joyful and merry of heart;—he regained his health with astonishing rapidity. Afterward he became pale and sad. None knew the cause. None knew that when the Rabbi sat up far into the night studying the pages of the *Gemara*, lying open before him, he heard a low sweet song in the court below; or that each time that the Rabbi opened his window to look, he beheld before him a beautiful young girl, whose smile, made icy by death, he perceived even through the veil of darkness. "Now," thought the Rabbi, "she might have been free and joyful in her maidenhood, singing like a bird in the air";—and through the long silent night he watered the thick pages of the *Gemara* with his tears. Once, near midnight, strange cries of anguish resounded about the house,—sounds strange as those extorted by pain. And then he heard the cry of an infant newly born. "Alas!" sobbed the Rabbi;—"It is I who have robbed her of that joy." Thereafter each night he heard those infant cries mingled with the celestial music of a mother's cradle-song. And then there fell a long silence.

Once again a light and joyful song was heard, and the Rabbi muttered to himself: "Now it is her first male child

who is making his *barmitzveh* (religious initiation), and it is I who have deprived her of that joy!" Silence fell once more.

Three years after the Rabbi again heard the happy songs, and said to himself in the darkness: "Now she is leading her daughter under the *houpe* (nuptial dias). Woe! woe upon me, that I should have deprived her of this joy."

And when the voice was heard again it was no longer a sound of lamentation or of weeping; but a gentle and delicious voice; and the Rabbi would say to himself "she would have been a happy mother; and it is I who have destroyed her happiness!" And in this wise did the Rabbi live through all the life of the young girl. He would have given worlds to have heard but once in place of these beautiful melodies some sound of bitter complaint; for thus he might have been assured that she would have known misery upon earth. But this wish was never heard; and the Rabbi forever moistened the pages of the *Gemara* with his tears. "What!" he sobbed,—“Would she indeed have been so happy as this!" Then did he long to die, to pine away;—for the voice of the ghostly singer made his life weary to him. Yet he could not die.

So he became old and decrepit; all the members of the congregation went down to the grave before him; there was not even one child out of all whom he had *gebeuscht* (blessed) that he had not seen creep about him as sad old men, vainly seeking to ward off death with their crutches;—for they all passed away. But he!—he could not die. "When shall my hour come, young girl?" he often asked;—"how long dost thou desire to live?" And then at last, one

night near midnight, he heard in the court below a sound like the voice of one dying. "Now she is dead," muttered the Rabbi;—"be God's name hal-

lowed forever!" Early in the morning of the next day the *Bochrim* found him dead, with his head resting upon the *Gemara*.

## In Black and White

By WILLIAM ALEXANDER PERCY.

### TEMPERAMENTAL.

She was so lonely! John himself agreed  
This night-work meant her soul he was neglecting.  
The children slept, she could not work nor read,  
So rang the phone, almost before reflecting.  
Eight was the number, but they gave her seven,  
And she had said she'd be alone a spell  
Before she realized 'twas Jack, not Stephen.  
But what of that? Jack did almost as well.

### ONE WAY TO BE POPULAR.

Yet none could say she was no virgin when  
She simpered down the aisle her white dress stained.  
They only wondered how clean-minded men  
Through her had lost so much, yet nothing gained.

### A PRAYER ANSWERED.

#### A TRUE SPORT.

She knew he had no heart, nor soul, nor mind,  
But married him for other powers. Well,  
The three he lacked she furnished—bargains bind!  
And held him faithfully above her hell.

She prayed to God for strength to say him nay,  
And rose up strong and purified.  
Yet when his mouth was clinging the old way,  
Weeping, she naught denied.

But since the night she spied the self-same kisses  
Fall elsewhere with the self-same lies,  
Although she prays no more, yet she scarce misses  
What firmly she denies.

# Antwerp

By ARTHUR SYMONS.

**A**S Ernest Dowson's verse, like himself, has the pathos of things too young and too frail ever to grow old, as his verse haunts one like a perfume, like an air of Rameau played on a clavichord, as he and his rarest verses will be remembered by those who care passionately for poetry, I begin these notes by giving here for the first time one of his letters he sent me when I was living in Fountain Court:

Bridge Dock,

Thursday, Nov. 15, 1894.

*My Dear Symons:*

I can't for the life of me think of what to send Harris. Do you think an article on "Politics and the Pulpit" with a certain amount of reprobation of Messrs. Clifford, Parker et cie would be of use?

Did I meet you the other night in the Temple in a state of the most extreme intoxication (*my* state, I mean) or did I dream it? I am just going off to interview Elkin Matthews. I am hovering between "Blind Alleys" and "Sentimental Dilemmas" as a title for my stories.

Let me wind up with an epigram (in the antique sense of the word)

*Pygmalion á Rebours.*

Because I am idolatrous and have besought

With grievous supplication and consuming prayer,

The admirable image that my dreams have wrought

Out of her swan's neck and her dark abundant hair:

The jealous Gods that brook no worship save their own

Have made mine idol marble and her heart—a stone.

Ever yours,

*Ernest Dowson.*

*Par example*, I have not forgotten that I owe you 5/6. When I next see you I hope to be in a condition to repay you. At present I am existing by the practice of uncomfortable economies.

It was in April, 1895, that three of us crossed the Channel by sea from Newhaven on the "Colchester;" besides myself, there were Dowson, and Smithers, our cynical publisher with his diabolical monocle.

I paced the deck the greater part of that night; sleep had forsaken me; but, as I leaned over and watched the white foam that swirled behind the steamer, adoring and enduring the wind and moonlight on the sea, the reasons that had driven me from London returned to me in all their intensity; all this reacted on my nerves: and with all my nerves I wrote a sonnet that begins:

"The white foam rushes back into the night

Of waters; far behind, I see the lights  
Of ships that sail from England; and  
the sky



Bots out the world beyond. Would  
 God that I  
 Could so blot out the past I hurry from  
 Into oblivion and a little foam!"

We entered the harbour, found rooms in a hotel, where we dined, and then went to the invariable Casino—can one conceive how many Casinos one has entered;—which was a closed place, stifling with heat and smoke and the noise of many voices. It had none of the irrelevant fascination of the Casino at Ostend! where, during the nights I spent there—beside the gambling that went on—there were crowds of curious and ambiguous and fantastic people come from the world's end: and for no more reason, I imagined, than to find such adventures I myself always loved—and to make love. It was there that I saw the Comtesse de Paris smoking cigarettes. Strange was her beauty, with those astonished eyes of hers that gazed on you with wonder, with that small forehead, with those masses of blood-red hair, tressed in an original fashion. She had a slightly curved nose, a small red mouth and a tiny chin; and, in her air, something disdainful.

At any rate my first night's experience in the Casino at Antwerp was a kind of hell; something unnatural and odious and hideous and revolting. Never have I heard—not so much in the Casino as in the streets—such a din of voices and such jargons of dialects. We, like the rest, had to smoke and drink beer. As for the women who came up to our table and sat beside us, all I can say is that they gave me a sense of horrible aversion.

As for Flora of the Eden—the Casino

was named Eden—she was amazing: for she caught hold of me with the ferocity of a wild beast, a beast insatiable; a form of what Huysmans called "the immortal Hysteria, the monstrous, indifferent, irresponsible, insensible Beast, poisoning all that go near to her, all that look on her, all that she touches." Certainly, everyone knows what it is to feel inordinately sleepy—incredibly in need of sleep—either after a sleepless night or in places, like the cafés in Berlin, where one is literally suffocated by the volumes of smoke that issue from German pipes. That is an experience I have never forgotten; nor can I forget that sense of suffocation I endured in the Antwerp Casino; when, as I nodded, the floor seemed to heave up under me. Finally we escaped, and as we went back to the hotel we saw our shadows shake under the gas-lamps, in a kind of fiendish mockery. "*Mais, rein n'est absolu sur ce globe terraque.*"

I was then very much mixed up with my two strange companions and, as a matter of fact, Smithers' sudden appearance on the scene—the scene being my rooms in Fountain Court one winter night—always seems to me curiously like that of the advent of Poulet-Malassis in Paris in 1856; he began by printing in 1857 the rare edition I have before me of *Odes Funambulesque* of Théodore de Banville, and in the same year *Les Fleurs du Mal* of Baudelaire. As Baudelaire certainly instilled into him a certain amount of taste as to printing and binding and spacing the margins of the paper and adding the delicious novelty of a mixture of red and black ink on many of the title-pages; so, I did much the same thing

with my very tractable publisher. As I look on my first edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal* and on my first edition of my *London Nights*, the proof positive is that no publisher can reproduce the marvellous effect of these two columns of verse.

It still amuses me to recall our wanderings over Antwerp. There were, of course, the night-café's which were different from those in Paris and in Spain; they were sordid retreats in sordid streets of the worst classes I have ever seen. Baudelaire was right in expressing his hatred of the Belgians and of their generally hideous appearance. The hilarity, such as it was, was much grosser than in the worst kind of *brasseries* in Paris: the *brasseries* I have passed this June, with the same aversion I always had for them. Verlaine, naturally, who haunted every café in the Latin Quarter, haunted these; with their zinc tables and their horrible drinks. The nights we spent in these cafés in Antwerp are neither historical nor traditional; they gave us a certain cynical and sardonic interest in finding ourselves in a country we had never visited. Dowson took a rather tragic and a rather melancholy view of the women who thronged these tables. In one word: we were out of our element.

A sinister adventure happened to Dowson one night in his bedroom next to mine; when he came in into mine, looking more pallid than usual, and asked me to help him out of a certain situation in his room. This I unwillingly did; I suppose I did him a certain service; but the situation itself was one of the most comical I have ever seen; like some situation in *Crebillon fils*: yes, the one I open, *La Nuit et la*

*moment*, where Clitandre says to Cidalise: "*Comme vous, Madame; qu'elles aller aient cette sensibilité modérée que l'amant lui même est obligé de chercher, que n'est émue que par sa présence, déterminée que par ses caresses, et que tout autre que lui voudroit vraiment évielles.*"

From Antwerp we went to Brussels; but this I described in "Bertha at the Fair" in *The Savoy*. We went from there to Bruges; one of the three loveliest Dead Cities I have come on in my wanderings: the others are Arles and Toledo. Bruges, like Arles, hints of every gentle, refined, reflective way of fading out of life, of effacing oneself in a world to which one no longer attaches any value; always remembering itself, always looking into a mournfully veiled mirror which reflects something at least of what it was, on each side of its quiet canal; sleepy as with the sleepy sense of an unquiet slumber; in the air itself something of decay; a smell of dead leaves everywhere, the moisture of stone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dowson's poetry is classical rather than romantic; seeming almost to dispense with imagination as it dispenses with all that exteriorizes vision in imagination, it is really suffused by imagination as by a gentle and constant light. Emotion, caught up into poetry before it has had time to grow too egoistically energetic, speaks as directly as if rhythm itself has the same quality of subtle naturalness, avoiding at its best, that too martial beat which verse-writers as a rule find it so difficult to avoid, or are irresistibly tempted to seek. Dowson was an exquisite artist in

cadences, whether in long floating lines like

"I go where the wind blows, Chloe,  
and am not sorry at all;"  
or in short, sighing lines like

"Yes, to be dead,  
Dead, here with thee to-day—  
When all is said,  
'Twere good by thee to lay  
My weary head."

His poetry, more than that of any other writer of the day, is "over-heard," when it is heard at all; it has the essence of poetry, if scarcely more than that essence; and there will always be a few genuine *amateurs* to treasure it, as the genuine *amateur* treasures the rare, easily lost, little perfect things of the world.

## Origins

By WILLIAM GRIFFITH.

*Beginning with Lilith and Eve, there have been two classes of women—those who have taken the strength out of men, and those who have put it back.—PROVERB.*

Into a dark world of strange talk  
Came a soft voice,  
As that of a bird  
Lulling forest and fen.  
And then,  
Stirred  
By a word  
That bade him rejoice  
And rise and walk,  
Adam awoke,  
Spoke,  
Listened awhile  
For an answering call,  
As a great silence fell over all.  
Brooding and serious,  
Something mysterious  
On him was casting the shadow of pain  
When, with a vain,  
Curious smile,  
(A sigh of the eye),  
As a siren went by,  
The first of men shuddered,  
Turned over and over  
In thistle and clover,  
And slept again:

*And dreamt of Lilith!*

Darker and stranger grew the world;  
Fig leaves were shed,  
And serpents curled.  
And overnight  
Was born delight,  
And overday  
Was born desire,  
To curb diamay  
Lest Adam tire.  
The skies were red;  
And all the glory  
Of time in story  
Suddenly flashed,  
And thunder crashed;  
And under the vine and fig-tree there,  
Gowned and crowned with her radiant hair,  
And frail as fire and free as the air,  
And fair as her daughters have sought to be  
fair,  
A woman stood  
In virginhood.  
Over the grass  
It came to pass  
That her eyes spoke...  
So sweet was she  
To hear and see,  
So virginwise,  
That from his eyes  
And body then  
The scales had all but fallen when  
Adam awoke.

*Eden and Eve!*



# The Roof Garden

By HANIEL LONG.

**F**ARQUHAR lived at home with his mother and two young sisters.

It was his pitiful jest, thus maintaining the family hearth, that he would never need to marry, that he had already the pleasures of marriage with none of the inconveniences. Nevertheless, he was conscious of a girl who lived across the street, and he thought about this girl a great deal.

Though metropolitan born, Farquhar had never had a drink. So, the day before the prohibition law went into effect, his friends urged him not to let slip this final opportunity of sharing what had been the secret of so many civilizations. It occurred to Farquhar, who was circumspect, that there was no risk about it, for in case he enjoyed the experience the new law would remove any temptation to repeat it.

The evening was not old when Farquhar became uncertain in his gestures. His friends took him out of the club into the cool night, and walked him up and down. He felt to the full the wonder of personal insecurity, and observed with surprise a vertigo extend itself to buildings and to stars. His companions fed their gold watches to mutely protesting cab horses, or rushed into the traffic to dust their cigars on passing motor cars. These exercises seemed to him too simple. He looked down at his shirt front, he removed his opera hat and inspected it, and he wondered who dared clothe a son of rapture in such garments. Un-

speakable dissatisfactions trampled one another in the forest of his mind.

The party broke up, and at an indefinite hour Farquhar found himself sitting in a doorway, and he seemed to himself horribly sober—more sober than he had ever been before. He looked at the opposite corner, and began to think how many times he had gone round that corner. He had always known where he was going, too, when he went round that corner. He reflected sadly that he always knew where he was going; he always would know. That was the trouble with him, and there was no savor in life, except for the girl across the street.

He made up his mind to go round that corner and not know where he was going, for the thought of the girl had wakened something adventurous in him. He proceeded with care; but an unsteadiness of direction led him to collide with a tall man who was sulking against a building.

"Stop sulking," said Farquhar.

The man explained that he had a grievance. He had come sixty miles to reach the city before the bars closed, but he had arrived too late, and now he was never to have another drink.

"Help me round that corner," said Farquhar, selfishly.

The man seized him by the arm, and they circled the corner at top speed. Farquhar was amazed to see in front of him a most gorgeous something that was evi-



dently a roof-garden. Under the gay awnings acres and acres of flowers were blossoming, and trees went up like candelabra, and the sound of music floated from the far interior. The tall man cursed softly under his breath, and dropping Farquhar's arm, made but two steps of the distance between him and the fascinating spot. Farquhar followed more slowly.

The establishment seemed to go on endlessly beneath the heavens. There were many customers in sight, and one felt certain that many many others were concealed by the mounds of shrubbery. There were masses of fern, ambuscaded orchestras, statues, fountains; and to the right of the entrance rose a bar of platinum, stretching out until lost in the distance. The tall man was already leaning against this bar, and seemed to be in excited conversation with the bartender. As Farquhar drew near, it was evident that a misunderstanding had occurred.

"I never heard of it," said the bartender.

"Great Scott! Never heard of a Martini!"

"And besides, at this bar you don't order what you want; we give you what you look as though you needed. You simply step to the railing, and we do the rest."

The tall man was speechless. Farquhar himself though it a strange idea, but the bartender was the last person in the world he expected to see in such a place. Not that there are no handsome bartenders, or active bartenders, or insolent bartenders; but who has ever seen a sweet strange bartender, with something pantherish and velvety about

him? He was a mere lad, and as he discoursed he kept six or seven large bottles revolving in the air. He seemed the spirit of the remarkable garden over which he presided. This lad, thought Farquhar, is accustomed to other liquors than those in transit across a city bar, and to brighter eyes than those of the regular customers.

"What do I look as though I needed?" inquired the tall man.

"You need a sense of humor."

"Go to the devil," said the tall man, turning away.

"Wait," requested the bartender; and set about concocting a drink. "There's a man in town would give a million dollars for a little of this," he volunteered, opening a bottle with an antique label.

"How much is it going to cost me?" demanded the tall man.

"To you, dear friend, there is no charge."

Convinced he was being mocked, the tall man again and in a louder voice bade the bartender go to the devil, and with various imprecations turned on his heel and departed.

The boy, with no sign of disappointment, now gave his attention to Farquhar. "How did you get in?" he asked.

Farquhar recounted the events of the evening so far as he remembered them.

"Very odd, very odd," commented the boy, rubbing his youthful chin. "There are only two ways of finding this bar, generally speaking; one is to be in love and one is to get drunk."

"It can't be so very exclusive then. Everyone must find it sooner or later."

"Yes, everyone finds it once. The difficulty is, the second time a man falls in love or gets drunk he doesn't find it,

and then he keeps on trying, like a fool." The bartender gazed at the doorway through which the tall man had disappeared. "You're lucky, though; you can't get drunk again. But tell me, you are in love, aren't you?"

"No, I'm not."

"Isn't there someone?"

"Well, there's a girl across the street."

"I thought there was a girl across the street."

Farquhar changed the subject. "If this is a roof-garden, what does it roof?"

"It roofs the earth, I suppose."

"What?"

"Yes, it's everywhere, when you're in the mood to see it. But what will you have?"

"Give me what I need."

The bartender did a buck and wing thoughtfully, and clapped his hands. "I'll give you the limit," he exclaimed.

As he made the remark the sky behind him was brushed with fire, and the sun rose; and he seized the sun and squeezed a few ruddy drops into the glass. The sun vanished, and a moon hung in its place. The bartender grasped the moon as though it were a lemon, cut it in two, and allowed the golden juice to drip from it. The moon vanished too, and mountains reared up. The bartender put a spigot deftly into them, and drew off a finger and a half of rich liquid. The mountains faded, and in their place prairies stretched to the horizon. The bartender took the cork out of the prairies, and poured their wine into the receptacle. The prairies gave way to the sea. The bartender scooped the foam off a flying wave. Then he folded up the sea and put it back in its place, wiping the platinum bar as he

did so. The glass seethed with what it held. The boy added something which resembled plain earth from a cinnamon shaker, cracked a star or two into the astounding mixture, shook it, hurled it through a strainer, snapped his fingers, and poured out the achieved potation into an extremely large cocktail glass.

Farquhar looked a last time at the world, and set the glass to his lips. The next moment he noticed with surprise that he still lived. But how changed he felt! He had sunfire within him, and moon madness, and the timeless peace of prairie and mountain, and the impudent, unendurable pushing of the sea.

"How is it the garden remains open?" he asked. "Isn't it very late?"

The boy smiled and winked an inscrutable eye, giving him to understand he could get a drink whenever he desired.

Farquhar began to examine the vast cafe. A royal palm lifted itself heavenward beside his table. A veritable giant with his colossal drink inside him. The youth plucked up the palm by the roots, remarked the curving crest of foliage, ran his fingers down the smooth white stem to the root maze. He replanted the palm in the earth, and picked a white flower at his feet. It was a common flower, yes, it was the daisy, but he ventured to admire it. Then a lizard attracted his eye, a charming grotesque in Nature's best manner. He lifted his eyes and beheld afar off a white city fairer than any he had imagined; and just then a newsboy rushed into the garden crying:

"Prohibition repealed!"

Nobody paid the slightest attention to him; but Farquhar was alarmed.

The bartender shrugged his shoulders. "Other bars don't interfere with our business," he said. "We don't compete."

"It isn't true anyway," said the newsboy, gleefully. He took off his clothes, and Farquhar recognized him as the lad who had posed for the various Cupids in his home town. He even had snowy plumes of the conventional sort on his shoulders.

"You bet we don't compete," he agreed; and moving off among those who sat in arbors and under leaves, he began to sing of inebriation, with the full-throated treble of a choir-boy who knows nothing of what he sings but its melody.

"Who owns this garden?" inquired Farquhar, suddenly.

"You'll see her soon."

And Farquhar did. More poems and chorales had been written, more temples

dedicated, to this lady than to anyone else in the history of the world. It was an incongruous tribute to her; but it was none the less sincere. Besides, she had been the subject of innumerable sculptures and paintings, even in the new manner in which she appeared conical or geometrical—none of which latter Farquhar could begin to comprehend, but many of which he had examined carefully, with often a warm desire in his heart to drink of the spring which had so affected others.

At last she saw him, and smiled, and extended her arm towards him, as though to say: "Come, and walk with me in my garden; come, and love me."

Farquhar leapt off his bench with surprise.

"What's the matter?" inquired the bartender.

"Why, she's the girl across the street!" he explained, and moved eagerly toward her.

## Miniature

By STEPHEN HUGUENOT.

Controlling himself with an effort, he bent toward her.

"For the last time," he said, "will you marry me?"

"Not for the first time," was the scornful reply.

He raised his hand, as if he would protest her decision. Then, meeting her eyes, he bowed.

"It is the end," he said, simply.

Without further speech, Rogers took his hat, his gloves, his cane, his departure, and, finally, his life.

# The Jug of Dreams

By PAUL ELDRIDGE.

We carry our dreams in jugs upon our heads and balance them, as do the oriental peasant-women. But sooner or later, the jostling, pushing crowd, we call Life, throws the jugs off, and our dreams spill, and feet trample upon them as upon so much bothersome mud. Now, most of us are soon glad the burden is over, and we can also jostle and push with ease. But here and there some poor fool bends to gather his dreams. Is there any wonder he is stepped upon and kicked by the feet of the world? And there are a few, whose jugs though broken, still balance their heads and their bodies, and insist they have their dreams. They are the insane—the happy ones. Is there any wonder they are locked away, and hidden from the sight of the others? Only the gods of the world have a right to their dreams.

## Withdrawal

By MARX G. SABEL.

I covenant to keep the appointed way,  
    Appraising neither happiness nor dole  
Until the consummation. Myrtle spray  
    And nettle, fecund plant and barren bole  
I covenant to garner: this also,  
    The final hour of life, the attaining point  
When death shall bend my tired body low,  
    And with dear dust my nodded head anoint.

These things I covenant, and covenanting  
    I disengage my mind from further thought;  
All my inexorable pain supplanting  
With mute indifference. I am untaught,  
And elemental. Inaccessible  
    To life or death, or even Heaven or Hell!



# The Success Trust

By JEANETTE MARKS.

HERE is a nose-mob in this country far removed from both the job and the mob of the politician. I refer to our art-loving (!) public, its left hand on a fat pocket purse, its right hand ready for an obsequious pull of the forelock to anything English or European. It takes a new country to improve upon an old adage. In the United States it is the American artist who is without honor.

Intelligent responsibility for the arts is not the purchasable thing easy-going Americans think it to be. It is something more than a wealthy flunky in things intellectual seated complacently in the bald-headed row while a cynical European, on the platform, paid so much per night by the Dash Lyceum Agency, tickles the vanities of the bald-headed row both by his presence and the *finesse* of his adroit flattery of the powers of the wallet. Yes, intelligent responsibility in the arts is something more than hand-clapping the English or European *Success Trust* at \$1,000 a night or \$600 a night or \$400 a night! It involves something with a thicker covering of cerebral cortex than that which surrounds the fat wallet.

Our magazines, if they intend either to start or to continue—they can seldom do both in this country except upon a concrete bedding of dollars!—announce in eloquent paragraphs that a representative is "already on the way to Europe and England to find the best in fiction,

poetry and the essay!" Or they announce from time to time that the celebrated English author, Mr. G. Raise Dickens will contribute a serial to *The American Art Valet* which has for its subject a delightful exposition of the crudities of American speech and manner. These pioneers in starting a new magazine do not say, "We are sending our representative to California, to Utah, to Wisconsin, to all the states of these United States, to get into touch with the art groups and to bring back the best in American fiction, verse and essay." Why should they? The American art-loving public would not get a single thrill out of such a naive and loyal performance! Occasionally—oh! very occasionally—an editor will write somewhat in this vein: "Your poems have come. The chances are, they only tug at the heart of the shepherd, for this is no more than a glad mediocrity, enlivened by what we dare. . . . The Editor is hardly of a mold to shape things for smugness and . . . which almost led to much futile discussion . . . Commercial life is like that. So often the heart grabs at what the head denies, knowing its audience." This sort of Editor never long survives the American art-loving public.

The bills of our Little Theatres announce plays chiefly by Europeans. Cornered, these Little Theatre managers will say that the "form" of the American play is inferior to the Euro-

pean. It takes a generous Englishman, Harold Brighthouse, writing in the *Manchester Guardian*, to give the poor American devil his due: "The typical one-act play of the American Little Theatre is a very vigorous growth indeed, and . . . its massed results are impressive." The brilliant technique of the American short story might seem to assure an even superior technique for our play! . . . But our very prizes, as *vide* the Pulitzer prizes, are a doubtful encouragement to the "best." They are given not for the "best" (that would involve too much work of excavation among artists without "push" or "pull") but the "best produced" or the "best published." Again, even if in another direction, pulling the forelock not to merit but to success.

One of our timid American colleges, about to start on an aggressively prosperous career in the arts and letters of overpaid stone buildings and underpaid teachers and lazy students, decides it will imitate the Oxford buildings. It does so. No expense will be spared even if the Professor must receive less than the janitor. In an architectural instance of this kind, the art-loving American public knows what it should do and does it handsomely. The imitation is perfect if palpable. But was there an American who years and years ago thundered from Concord that "imitation is suicide?" However, the college proceeds with an education as assiduously valeting English and European training as its buildings imitate its outer surfaces in cold stone. And the result is cringing, vulgar imitation.

Being parrots in stone is bad enough. But did not Emerson—it was so long

ago, forgive me for asking—write an Essay on *The American Scholar* in which he tells us something of what it means to become "the parrot of other men's thinking?" What, then, about being the parrots of other men's art? Which has in it more danger to society, a delegated thought or a delegated emotion? Is there any treachery worse than borrowed feeling? Yes, so many parrots of English and European art are there seated in that bald-headed row, both sexes, plump, obsequious, swaying their cockatoo heads in approval of the latest lion caught by the Dash Lyceum Agency in the gilded cage of American dollars. Very flattering! We are the richest nation on the earth! We can buy anything! . . .

While this intellectual valeting of England and Europe goes on, our own artists starve. They live in garrets, (not of the comfortable variety), they go hungry, they have neither shoes for their feet nor adequate covering for their bodies. If they are very very sensible, they become floor walkers in shops or book agents or elevator boys or hotel waiters or what not. The trouble is most of them have no sense at all except the noblest which, starving or not, devotes itself to beauty. While M. Beaupou of France or M. G. Raize Dickens of England is pacing his lion pace up and down our gilded Lyceum platform at one thousand to six hundred dollars per night per lecture, lucky is that hungry and ill-paid 125 per cent American artist to receive \$25 or \$50 for stumbling hungrily about some dark little parlor talking to a group of forty or fifty people on *The Merits of Masefield* or *The Tragedy of Rupert Brooke*

No American subjects desired! Or they merely lie—those 125 per cent. American artists of ours—seemingly so many dead bodies in a dead heap, occasionally one emerging to crawl exhausted and crippled to the top like a living fly struggling out from a cluster of dead flies.

Or by a ten stroke of fortune or some power for hard thinking and courage, not entirely crushed out by starving, an artist will go to England, live "on the clay" with a few sticks of furniture and a few loaves of bread for himself and his children, get the *cachet* of English approval, (than which nothing except a title is dearer to the flunky American public) and come back to find the doors of *The Old Maid's Monthly* and *The Gael Review*, hitherto firmly closed in his face, wide open and fairly fanning to and fro under the stress of their agitated welcome, with solicitous voices calling "More, Mr. Poet, more!" Cynically he then can re-submit what has already been rejected in these offices with the comfortable pocket-security for himself and his children of knowing they will now be accepted. Of all higher joy in the recognition of his art he has been robbed by flunky audiences and flunky editors.

But all our artists are not clever enough or strong enough to win such diplomatic triumphs in the arts. Lamentably wanting in common sense, some of them become ugly and unmanageable, break their hearts, or grouse in garrets or starve (literally) or kill themselves. Of course it was all so beautiful about that English youth Chatterton who so many years ago "perished in his pride." These Amer-

ican artists are not beautiful—that is, usually they are not, for the bony structure of their faces is too rugged—and they perish in the slums of New York or Boston or Chicago or San Francisco or some such vulgar place. Quite stupid and blundering of them to die in that way! The unmanageableness of the artistic temperament is proverbial. No, the American public throws its doors wide open only to the British and European *Success Trust* and to those Americans, "L't'd," upon whom has been set the seal of British and European approval.

Responsibility for the arts means something besides gaping at what has already "arrived," something besides hand-clapping what we purchase at such a magnificent price, something besides the role of the parrot and repeating over and over, "Polly wants a lion, European please! Polly wants a lion, European please!" It means something which takes a deal more thought than any of these things: It means the search for and discovery of what has *not* "arrived"; it means forwarding and protecting that which it finds; it means establishing an audience for it.

The writer does not need to be told that art knows no country, has no national boundaries, that wherever beauty is it belongs to all the world. Nevertheless art, like charity, begins at home. But for this sort of responsibility it would seem the American public is not ready. It will educate fools and wise men at college, it will give to unconsidered charities, it will establish a new religious cult (no matter what the expense is) without batting an eye. But it will buy and sell in things of beauty



nothing but what is stamped "England" or "Europe." What has happened? Time was when England's failure to recognize her best but added warmth to our love. Have we no love for our own unappreciated "best"?

The writer has no axe to grind, no grudge. Of the few books he has published, five have been published in England, and one is now in process of publication. The only prize he has taken was won in competition with British contestants and he won a "first." His first literary work was done in answer to English request. The writer has spent half a life time in the reverent and enthusiastic study of English poetry. His ancestors were English yeomen who came to this country at the close of the seventeenth century. He counts among his most-loved friends several English people; part of his education was in England, part in Europe. Some of the happiest days he has ever spent or ever will spend, were passed in Great Britain.

It is assuredly not the fault of the English or the European that the condition of the arts should be for American artists what it is in this country. It is only natural that English and European artists should flock to this land of milk and honey. It is true that the American lecture system kills some,—perhaps one "lion" out of every ten. But then no jungle is without its dangers even for a lion, and there is always the possibility of a well-filled pocket rather than a well-filled grave! The responsibility—if they will neglect their own "children" and adopt what to them seem the handsomer "children" of

England and Europe—rests squarely on American shoulders and on a cockoo public laying its eggs in nests not its own.

Clement Shorter, editor of the *London Sphere* said in the office of *Poetry* (Chicago) to Harriet Monroe, "I am telling these Chicago business men that the centre of the English-speaking poetry world is now in this city." It is a matter of indifference to the writer whether that "centre" be in New York or Chicago or Boston or San Francisco. From my point of view it is not in England but is somewhere in our own country. However, admit for the moment that both Mr. Shorter and the writer are wrong. Let us say that our young artists are inferior to the English artists. Does that in the least alter our responsibility for loyally supporting in material and immaterial ways these artists who belong to us?

What is it that constrains us to forego our freedom in matters of art? What is this attitude of the flunky mind anyhow? It is not youth, for youth has courage and independence. Why is it that we must let our own artists starve while we make fat the pockets of some pleasant-mannered but not over-gifted English youth or add to the success of some middle-aged European who needs no additions? What is to be the spiritual destiny in the arts of a country capable of such treachery at home? Is there anything of greatness in this cruel neglect of our own and this "foolish face of praise" for the stranger? Where is all remembrance of the manliness, of the courage of the non-conformity we once practiced in American life?



## With All Their Vessels

By JOHN McCLURE.

"With rhythms timorous or strong  
And all their vessels rhyme-enwrought,  
What poets ever shaped in song  
Even the shadow of their thought?"

"Some have but gestured, out of breath,  
Toward the apocalypse they see;  
Some have gone gibbering to death;  
And some have shaped it cloudily."

## Lupo De Braila's New York Letter

**A**BOUT this time of the year all sensitive people begin to question the value of the big city. All faults increase, and all virtues are out somewhere in the country or near the seashore. To tell the truth, this city looks guilty to me right now.

The streets of New York make me feel as if I were living inside of a drawer of a card index file. Signs and names, signs and names from the beginning to the end of every street and avenue. If you investigate these very important signs and face the bearers of the names engraved on these signs, you realize more than ever the similarity of the index cards to these institutions.

Huge buildings, enormous signs, immense undertakings singing out loudly: We are not built and we do not live for the one fine thing in life, love. And you wander on these pavements and you

look at the sign-carrying walls and you know that the fine human beings are hiding somewhere, but not behind these pretentious walls on Broadway, Fifth Avenue or Wall street.

Sometimes you find them in the much-maligned Greenwich Village. One afternoon I attended a concert given by some modern artists in one of the quaint streets of the village. It was a treat for the gods. Maestra Stella, the soloist, was ably assisted by Man Ray. Alfred Kreymborg, who is growing a long beard at present, was the conductor of the improvised orchestra. Margaret Anderson, as the first violinist, made a great hit. Djuna Barnes bravely played the *piccola*, Lola Ridge was vigorously behind the bagpipes, and William Carlos Williams played with gusto the kettledrums, while "Mr." Thayer daintily picked the strings of a ukelele between sneezes. There were others,

but my memory is weak. Below you may see Signor Stella singing *con amore* at the end of the festival. Oh yes—I must not forget Mr. Paul Rosenfeld, the author of the musical composition (somewhat after the Gregorian manner), who eyed the performers suspiciously. It was a joyous afternoon. All for the love of music.

\* \* \*

Amy Lowell delivered a lecture at Cooper Institute, and I went down there to see the poet I once called the "poster" of American poetry. She read a few beautiful poems, but the lecture (she read from manuscript) was something I cannot forgive anyone, stepping before an audience on a platform. The continuous references to universities and university professors, obviously to impress the audience with her importance, made many old attendants of this institution leave before the end. Why does she do it? She is a considerable personality, has some fine achievements to her credit in poetry, and has received a lot

of publicity. Why drag in university names?

\* \* \*

I saw "Inheritors" at the Provincetown Theatre, once a barn in a poor neighborhood in the village, now under the management of George Cram Cook and Susan Glaspell, the author of the play. A revolutionary play with the preaching left out, and therefore one of the few good radical plays. J. C. Cook carried the great philanthropic mood like his uniform, in a leisurely fashion. Here is a man whose shoes receive kind treatment. The heroine was a winner; she won a Broadway contract for next season. I wish there were more Provincetown theatres in the land.

\* \* \*

It may interest your readers to know that I have been commissioned to design a memorial statue of Kenelm Digby, recently murdered by Christopher Morley. The Column Conductors' Sick and Death Benefit Society is providing the funds for this memorial.

## Episode

By STEPHEN HUGENOT.

Lithe and lovely, the trio of maidens trod the pavements. A lively breeze blew in from the lake, and whipped their skirts to ecstasy, revealing poems in Coles Phillips' hosiery. The central blonde allured.

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried my friend, seizing my arm. "I wish I were an Ancient Mariner!" He was a poet.

They overheard, but did not understand. I smiled, knowing that intentions are recognized where Coleridge is not.

And so I wiped my spectacles with a one-hundred-dollar bill.

# Reviews

## THE POETRY OF EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

WITHOUT doubt America has found in the work of Edna St. Vincent Millay poetry of an extremely uncommon and exquisite kind. And in the pages and pages of verse circulated by the press how rare it is to come upon writing of which as much can be said. There is correct verse, original verse, free verse, but how little real poetry. And even when it appears it is more than likely that we miss it. Most of us have read so many laudatory reviews of the second-rate that we have come to take such writing very lightly. We have been disappointed so often that we tend to become incredulous, suspicious, blasé. Then one day by some accident our attention is really caught and the golden volume in our hands, we recognize at once, as by a swift revelation, that the pages before us are indeed illumined by the mysterious magical moonlight of true poetry. Now what is it that separates the poems of this young American girl in so unmistakable a way from other verse writers? Is it that they have about them that stamp of real authenticity which comes when the emotions described have actually been felt, when the ideas put down have actually been thought? I think so. For as in all true poetry there is about them an absolute spontaneity.

"I will be the gladdest thing  
Under the sun,  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
And not pick one.

"I will look at cliffs and clouds  
With quiet eyes,  
Watch the wind bow down the grass,  
And the grass rise.

"And when the lights begin to show  
Up from the town,  
I will mark which must be mine,  
And then start down!"

Simple enough they seem these three verses, and yet, when once read, they have a way of haunting the mind as only real poetry is able to do. Or does the peculiar appeal of these poems depend also upon the fact that more than any, they express the emotions, the visions, the tremulous thrill, of a young girl? Is it perhaps just this that helps to give them so indefinable an attraction?

"I will be the gladdest thing"  
How provocative, how feminine that is, how essentially girlish!

Indeed for this very reason some of these slight songs in "Renascence" have a charm and beauty about them that seems to hit one to the heart even more, perhaps, than her later more powerful work:

"Death, I say, my heart is bowed  
Unto thine—O mother!  
This red gown will make a shroud  
Good as any other!"

"I cannot but remember  
When the year grows old—

October—November—  
How she disliked the cold!"

Again, how simple and yet again how extraordinarily poetic. What associations, strange tragic Aubrey Beardsley-like and conjured up by the first; and in the second how that reiteration "October, November," troubles the imagination with its implication of the very soul and romance of those particular months. The fact is these snatches of song have about them the suggestive grace of world-old human associations. They are like wisps of newly-born midsummer hay, like thistle-down in the month of August, like red leaves in autumn, like handfuls of driven snow at the time of the feast of St. Stephen! Though her sonnets which have appeared from time to time in literary publications have won more public recognition it may very possibly be that her best work is to be found in these smaller, slighter poems. Of course, the difficulty of attaining to any degree of real excellence in the sonnet form is very great indeed. Anyone who attempts to write sonnets must be prepared perforce to enter the lists wherein only the mightiest have won fame. Yet even so the piercing rapier of this young girl is not to be despised though 'tis raised in a field where only veterans in armour hold their swords to the sky. What could be more restrained and yet more tragic and heart breaking than the one entitled "Bluebeard:"

"This door you might not open, and  
you did;  
So enter now, and see for what slight  
thing

You are betrayed—Here is no treasure  
hid,  
No cauldron, no clear crystal mirror-  
ing  
The sought-for truth, no heads of women  
slain  
For greed like yours, no writhings of  
distress,  
But only what you see—Look yet  
again—  
An empty room, cobwebbed and com-  
fortless.  
Yet this alone out of my life I kept  
Unto myself, lest any know me quite;  
And you did so profane me when you  
crept  
Unto the threshold of this room to-  
night  
That I must never more behold your  
face.  
This now is yours. I seek another  
place."

And then how exquisitely lovely are  
these opening lines:

"Thou art not lovelier than lilacs,—no,  
Nor honeysuckle; thou art not more fair  
Than small white single poppies,—I can  
bear  
Thy beauty;"

Surely in such simplicity, in such innocent beauty may be found the very living breath of true poetry with the very intonation, fragrant as a bunch of spring flowers, of girlhood itself, of Ruth amid her corn fields, of Nausicaa amid her river reeds.

Yet mark how, with equal naturalness, she can be modern also. Listen to what a sigh is here. And yet there is not a single one of these fourteen lines



which is not instinct with that old sadness incident to the tragic passing away of all things mortal:

"What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,  
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain  
Under my head till morning; but the rain  
Is full of ghosts to-night, that tap and sigh  
Upon the glass and listen for reply,  
And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain  
For unremembered lads that not again  
Will turn to me at midnight with a cry.

"Thus in the winter stands the lonely tree,  
Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one,  
Yet knows its boughs more silent than before:  
I cannot say what loves have come and gone,  
I only know that summer sang in me  
A little while, that in me sings no more."

That this gifted young woman is capable also of thoughts as penetrating and poignant as any of the great disillusioned poets can be proved by a glance at some of her later work:

"To what purpose, April, do you return again?  
Beauty is not enough.  
You can no longer quiet me with the redness  
Of little leaves opening stickily.

I know what I know.  
The sun is hot on my neck as I observe  
The spikes of the crocus,  
The smell of the earth is good.  
It is apparent that there is no death.  
But what does that signify?  
Not only under ground are the brains of men  
Eaten by maggots,  
Life in itself  
Is nothing,—  
An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.  
It is not enough that yearly down this hill  
April  
Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers."

How well that might have been written by any of the greatest disenchanted Frenchmen. What bitterness is there, and yet what beauty! There is another weird and lovely poem of hers that was published a month or so ago. It is called "Wild Swans," the last lines of it end like this:

"Wild swans, come over the town, come over  
The town again, trailing your legs and crying!"

Could anything be more suggestive, more absolutely thrilling in its clear imaginative quality than those lines? There are indeed few living poets to-day, either in England or in America, who could have written them. Search the anthologies from cover to cover and you will not find their match. You would have to open a volume of W. B. Yeats or Walter De la Mare.

How far Miss Millay will go it is impossible, of course, to say, but that she

has already produced work of very high value can be made clear to anyone who will take the trouble to read what she has already published. They will not regret the venture. Her poetry has the loveliness, the wistfulness of the songs of Ophelia heard in some place where plovers call to each other over wide stretches of ploughlands.

Perhaps, it is in that strange half-playful poem called "The Singing Woman From the Woods' Edge," that she would seem to confess to a consciousness of the presence of this mysterious ambiguity in her work—an ambiguity which troubles the imagination long after her slim volume has been closed:

"What should I be but a prophet and a liar

Whose mother was a leprechaun, whose father was a friar?

Teethed on a crucifix and cradled under water,

What should I be but the fiend's god-daughter?

.....  
After all's said and after all's done,  
What should I be but a harlot and a nun?"

LEWELYN POWYS

## DARKWATER

BY W. E. B. DU BOIS

(Harcourt, Brace and Howe)

THE author of "Darkwater," Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, was born with "a flood of negro blood, a strain of French, a bit of Dutch, but, thank God! no Anglo-Saxon." He was grad-

uated from Harvard with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, spent two years at the Universities of Paris and Berlin and for several years taught sociology at Atlanta University. For more than ten years he has been Director of Publications and Research of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People and editor of *The Crisis*.

Dr. Du Bois has supplemented an excellent education by wide traveling and his pages give evidence to his extraordinary sensitiveness to beauty and to the whole range of human emotions. He is a thorough student of the race problem and is an outstanding figure in a certain school of thought in the relations of the races; a school whose ideas are clothed with plausibility by his ability to write masterfully in clear and simple English. He represents and typifies the radical in the negro race problem as Booker T. Washington represented and typified the conservative, and the gulf widens yearly between their conflicting and sharply opposed ideas.

Since the death of Washington some years ago Dr. Du Bois has gained an ascendancy over negro thought in this country that was denied him while their greatest leader was alive. His ideas are therefore of vital interest to the Southern people and it will be pertinent to examine into them here and note the trend of opinion among negro intellectuals.

"Darkwater" is a bitter book—bitter with the bitterness of gall and wormwood. Its pages flare with pent-up fury and boil over with repressed frenzy. "I remember once, in Nash-

ville, brushing by accident against a white woman on the street. Politely and eagerly I raised my hat to apologize. That was thirty-five years ago. From that day to this I have never knowingly raised my hat to a Southern white woman." And again, "Of them (the white people) I am singularly clairvoyant. I see in and through them—I see these souls undressed and from the back and the side. I see the working of their entrails. I know their thoughts and they know that I know. This knowledge makes them now embarrassed, now furious! They deny my right to live and be and call me mis-birth! My word is to them mere bitterness and my soul, pessimism. And yet as they preach and strut and shout and threaten, crouching as they clutch at rags of facts and fancies to hide their nakedness, they go twisting, flying by my tired eyes and I see them ever stripped—ugly, human." These sentences give the key to the character of the man whose influence is strong among thousands of his people and who appears to them in the guise of a leader to lead them out of the land of bondage.

Dr. DuBois has, however, in other places and at other times written of the hated whites in a far different manner. He was then more of a scientist engaged in the stating of complex problem and less of a propagandist engaged in exciting hatred and rancor. Thus we find him writing in 1901 (*The Relations of the Negroes to the Whites in the South*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (pp. 137-138) ) that the negro in large part has himself to blame for the crea-

tion of the color line—himself and other persons who are constantly bringing the question forward.

"It is usually true that the very representatives of the two races who for mutual benefit . . . ought to be in complete understanding and sympathy are so far strangers that one side thinks all whites are narrow and prejudiced and the other thinks all educated negroes dangerous and insolent. Moreover, in a land where the tyranny of public opinion and the intolerance of criticism is for obvious historical reasons so strong as in the South, such a situation is extremely difficult to correct. The white man as well as the negro is bound and tied by the color line, and many a scheme of friendliness and philanthropy . . . between the two has dropped still-born because some busybody has forced the color question to the front. . . ."

That Dr. Du Bois sees things with the crystal clear vision of the artist is evidenced by remarks that he made before the Negro Academy in session at Atlanta (W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Conservation of the Races," *American Negro Academy, Occasional Papers*, No. 2, p. 14) :

"The Negro Academy ought to sound a note of warning that would echo in every black cabin in the land. Unless we conquer our present vices, they will conquer us. We are diseased, we are developing criminal tendencies, and an alarmingly large percentage of our men and women are sexually impure."

The author of "Darkwater" has not always thought that the Southern

people are a race of slave drivers. He says that the Southern people are "essentially honest-hearted and generous" and that "this situation (the race problem) does not fail to interest and perplex the best conscience of the South. Deeply religious and intensely democratic as are the mass of the whites, they feel acutely the false position in which the negro problems place them" (*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 18, p. 139).

"Darkwater" is an attempt to convey the impression that all the negroes of the South lie under a monstrous shadow and are deeply depressed by a burning sense of inferiority that the white people will never for a moment permit them to forget. This is essentially false. The negro of the masses, certainly the agricultural negro of the South, is little concerned with the ever-present agitation carried on ostensibly in his behalf by mulattoes and white politicians. These negroes are busy emphasizing negro traits, and the ever-growing nucleus of negro land owners testifies to their thrift and industry, and are building for negroes a high place in the esteem of the whites.

The Southern negro has no occasion to cry out against lack of opportunity to labor because he is black. Such discrimination exists only in the North. He has little time to dissect the white man while acting as "bus boy" at the "broad and blatant hotel at Lake Minnetonka." He is engaged in producing the clothing of the world, in preserving his own racial characteristics, and carving out for himself a worthy place in the empire of the South, of

which he is so great a part and to which he has made such mighty contribution. If his criminals meet swift death in Mississippi for the crime of rape, he is burned at the stake in Pennsylvania for the same crime, and is swung aloft to dance upon the air in Kansas. The rank and file of the negroes of the South know nothing of the nuances that Dr. Du Bois weaves in their name—nuances that are alien to them and unfelt by them, and it is a commonplace that the people of the North are much more distressed at the condition of the negro then he is himself.

It is the personal tragedy of Dr. Du Bois—and this tragedy is spread upon the pages of "Darkwater"—that he finds little comfort in the thoughts of his own race, and is alien to the whites. He feels a great and depressing loneliness and weariness as he contemplates his people from the heights on which he stands, but he has little of the patience that serves to bring a lowly people up to the mountain tops. His values are not those of his people, his aspirations are not theirs, and his voice is scarcely audible above the voices of the cotton fields which sing the paean of the negro's joy in life.

The people of the South do not ask sympathy of the North. They feel that the negro problem is their problem and with the intelligent co-operation of the negro leaders of the South, and with understanding and tolerance on both sides, the problem can be adjusted. On all sides there are signs of co-operation between blacks and whites and a strong feeling of condemnation of any movement that will tend to make this rela-



tionship bitter and unpleasant. This desire is apparently no part of the personality of Dr. Du Bois.

The work that is being done by the educated and understanding white men of the South toward the adjusting of the negro problem, is seriously hampered by Northerners who are familiar only with the school of thought that Du Bois represents, and who know nothing of the saving sanity of Booker T. Washington. They inject a bitterness and a venom into the problem that is not shared by either the blacks or whites of the South. They render an injury to those whom they would befriend. They practice little of the tolerance and understanding which they preach to the Southern people. They contemplate Mississippi from the viewpoint of Back Bay and the corn-field negro of Alabama from the view-

point of the Harvard Yard. Their gratuitous contribution to the literature and discussion of the problem is an evil from which every intelligent Southern negro prays that he be delivered. They are part of that "vast number of Northern people who misinterpret the motives of the Southerners and watch every move with a critical and suspicious eye, ready at any moment to shout across Mason and Dixon's line that the negroes must have their rights under the Constitution of the United States," while entirely unmindful of the fact that "ever since the civil war the Southern people have been blindly groping after some system other than slavery whereby two races of widely different interests and attainments can live together in peace and harmony under a republican form of government." (Cutler, *Lynch Law*, 1905, p. 224-225.)

## Summer

By SYLVIA ELDRIDGE.

Two pale daffodils  
Canopied by a tawny mushroom.  
Like languid lovers  
Beneath a tawdry parasol.



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THE  
DOUBLE DEALER

VOLUME 2

1921

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# THE DOUBLE DEALER

JULY 1921

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## AND MARGINALIA

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## A NATIONAL MAGAZINE FROM THE SOUTH

HERALDS this issue, Volume II, of the *Double Dealer*. Over perilous water we have, at length, brought Volume I safely to port. At times it has seemed necessary to stop our ears against the courtesies of critics as, it is said, Ulysses stopped the ears of his men against the songs of the Sirens. For our reception has been much pleasanter than ever we anticipated.

An adventure such as this could not, however, be without its vicissitudes. The seas were rough, the goal far, and the bark frail. Various were the indictments lodged. For some we were too flippant, for others too highbrow. Where one reader found us "up in the air," another protests us "of the earth, earthy." Convicted on various counts by sundry judges we could but carry on with Chaplinesque nonchalance knowing the end near—an ambiguity, perhaps, annoying to subscribers. But rest assured, good patrons, "the end is not yet."

Heralds, also, this issue a slight change in program. From "A Magazine for the Discriminating" we have now become "A National Magazine from the South." This change for some time premeditated is but the first of several

forthcoming. It is self-explanatory. Here beginning it is purposed to provide a national medium for Southern writers and readers, and to further and encourage, to the best of our ability, the younger and more ambitious of our sectional penmen and women.

This does not mean, however, that the "imported stuff" is to go out. The imported matter will continue to go in, and in the same quantity, unless the quality of the Southern matter meets our standard. It seems most unfortunate, aye, almost shameful that we grandsons and daughters of the "late Confederacy" will not take the required pains which make for more virile expression.

Ours is an enviable heritage, an indisputable birthright, and it is chiefly because of this background—the only solid background, barring perhaps that of New England, in America—that we should have a voice. The *Double Dealer* extends the facilities for this voice.

## THE DEAD HAND

WE all know what a taboo is. It is a prohibition laid upon a whole race against a certain course of action, which becomes traditional and gathers weight with time. For instance, a tribe of "savages" in

one of the Solomon Islands discovers the sago palm. They press the poisonous juice from the pulp, regale themselves on sago, and guzzle the sap. Of course it turns out to be the last supper for a goodly majority. Instantly the sago palm becomes taboo to the tribe. In time it acquires a demoniac reputation, with supernatural overtones. To eat of the sago is then not only unhealthy but sinful, a blasphemy which is punished by death. Then some day comes the sceptic who, perhaps out of pure perversity, questions the centuries of sacred traditions. He presses the juice out of the sago, and eats the pulp. His black companions wait excitedly for the expected vengeance of the sago spirit. Miracle of miracles—none occurs. The man must be a god himself, or at least the son of a god. He is obeyed, bowed down to, and any idiotic utterance treasured as divine revelation for the generations ahead. So the world progresses.

These are savages. Of course among civilized people (e. g. ourselves) other conditions obtain. We are governed by rational development. We have the benefit of science. We are the "heirs of the ages." The world *does* move. We are controlling nature more every day. Harnessing the sun; plowing with the pressure of the mountains. We control all nature except human nature. Here we drift between the taboos of our fathers and the affirmations of our great grandfathers, and call the change, "advance"—savages with sewerage. Aborigines in automobiles. Scratch a tax payer and you have a Tahitan; a senator a Senegambian. The sum total of this kind of civilization is to substi-

tute for bows and arrows, poison gas and T. N. T. We have children monkeying with the levers of the power houses of human government, where the power has now become tremendous, terrible in its deadly capacity.

What is going to be the outcome? Is the world to blunder along arrogant in its new mechanical advantage to total annihilation, or are we going to throw over our dread heritage of hatred and prejudice, which seems to us a precious wisdom. Can we work out the situation in commonsense as we would the ordinary problem that besets our private life? I think not. The world of affairs is cluttered with dead men's ideals and dreams. We refuse to look into the heart of the problem at all. Rather do we content ourselves with the same empty phrases and words that our ancestors loved. "Liberty, Equality, Independence." We are still scared out of our wits by impossible threats, even as our swarthy, more décolleté brothers. We still love to be ordered around, believing anything and bowing down to anything which speaks firmly with a loud voice of power, preferring slavery to the insecurity of relying upon ourselves. And we are fixed in our stagnation, clotted against change by a tremendous code of morality, loyalty, righteousness, which is used by shrewd men to more advantage than the employment of a corps of machine-gunners.

"The mind of the race," says Morrison Swift, "is burdened with a mass of useless and harmful trash, and man's thoughts are a matchless mosaic of dead men's imbecilities." And Joseph Conrad speaks in his last book of the

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

illiterate (that is the ordinary man, you or me) ". . . who even from the dreadful wisdom of their evoked dead have so far culled nothing but inanities and platitudes."

From out this charnel house of decayed thought is a weary way. I question whether it can be traversed. Surely we can hope to get nowhere with our present idea that we have progressed because devices for fast transportation whirl us more quickly toward our graves. We must forget the idea that "all's right with the world" (or will be after a few strikes have been settled and a few indemnities paid). The world as we know it, civilization, is in the death grip. Our only hope is for a host of valiant pessimists, not over-night reformers, nor crazy-quilt patchworkers. We need tearers-down, clearers-of-the-ground. We need liberation from the iron rule of the dead hand.

### PEGASUS AND THE HOBBY HORSE

THE rider of Pegasus, a professional jockey in the lists of Fame, goads his winged steed to a fall or finish. The "Hobby" rider, an amateur sportsman, less fortunate, perhaps, than his dedicated brother, mounts his toy jennet "after hours" decked

Cap-a-pie

For Arcady.

Stevenson once wrote, "Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things. And it is

not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do." Thus, too, argues the "hobby" rider. And he is not easily discredited judging from the races he has run and won.

A man's business, in many instances, is simply a means to livelihood; a labor necessary to provide the wherewithal of existence; at best, a banal avocation. His calling, his vocation — colorless words—better, his urge, may be in the direction of pigs, poultry, painting, playing golf or the saxophone, quill-driving.

The world's lawn tennis champion is a life insurance agent. The official archivist of Canada is a tailor. A certain famous sculptor is a veterinary surgeon. The ranks of novelists, poets, painters and composers are filled with these oddly inconsistent fellows. To become personal, Louis Untermeyer, distinguished both as poet and critic, is a jeweller by trade. Francis Carlin, another lyric brother, is a floorwalker in a great New York department store. Knut Hamsun, the Norwegian novelist, winner of the Nobel prize, was for some time a street car conductor in Chicago. John Masfield is, self confessed, ex-busboy and bartender. Kenneth Graham, author of "Dream Days" and "The Golden Age" was "something in the Bank of England," Pierre Loti was a naval officer; Madison Cawein, the Kentucky poet, I am told, a professional gambler. The exhibits are numerous. Some day, mood and leisure prevailing, I shall sit down and roll them off for the diversion of the thing.

In my acquaintance I know of several interesting cases, one being the chief



auditor of a big railroad concern in Chicago and no mean bard "on the side;" another being that of a plasterer-poet; a third, an undertaker who paints porcelains; still another, a well known author-illustrator whose work-a-day job is that of automobile mechanic. The professions—legal, medical, academic—teem with "hobby" riders. But I believe the drollest case of all is that of a pompous pock-faced politician, ward-boss and bully for a large city, who does exquisite miniatures.

Well, what am I trying to prove? Simply this, that generation on generation of men, compelled by force of circumstance and a not unworthy distaste for garret and gutter, have rather than stake all—comfort, families, self-respect—on the Pegasean Steeplechase, contented themselves in their spare time with spurring little old "Hobby" for the fun of the thing. And absurd, though it seems, many of these amateur jockies, in the long run, far and away out-distance their professional competitors. It's the love of the sport that does it!

Observe your friends about you. Who are the interesting personalities? Are they not those who close their offices at closing time and forget their dull business in pursuit of some harmless hobby or other until opening time on the morrow? Take Stevenson's tip, ride old "Hobby" for all he is worth and, peradventure, some day you will find yourself careering down the field on Messire Fortune's favorite to a whirlwind finish.

## AN OLD SAW REFILED

**S**EVERAL thousand years back an Arab philosopher said:

"It is well to know the truth and speak it, but it is better to know the truth and speak about palm-trees."

Over the span of centuries we have grown wise; proudly we point to ourselves as "moderns"; we say we are "civilized." Above the turmoil of marching progress we hear shouted the imperious words Efficiency and Reform; and peeping beyond the horizons of our own well ordered little lives, we behold vast devices for the annihilation of our fellows. Down the years the great race of humans has experimented, failing here, succeeding there for a moment in knowing the truth and speaking it; yet it has stubbornly gone back to the second part of the old philosopher's dictum that it is better to speak about palm-trees.

It appears that we shall never grow wise enough to get beyond the inanity of our simple actions. It is probable that we shall always remain children and shudder forever at the idea of truth, the bitter potion, and continue to knock the spoon that contains it from the hand of our counsellors, letting the consequences go hang.

Undeniably, life, human experience, truth are bitter at best. Well, we must have our soothing syrups. To be effective, you argue, they must not resemble too severely this same bitter life on which we are continually being forcibly fed. But it is these very soothing syrups against which I protest. Examine them and you will discover that they are the subtle concoctions of purveyors

to mass appeal. Grotesquely unreal pictures of things, like *The Happy Ending* or *The Perfect Leg*. If they were but salad for the imagination one might pass them by, but behold, they are the victuals upon which imagination feeds.

At intervals the case for human credulity is not so black as I have painted it. For instance, the Main Street school in literature. This is bed-rock realism and it has succeeded with surprising alacrity. The country has stormed the libraries and bought several thousand copies of Mr. Lewis' book alone, which, if practically worthless as literature, is tonic to the disordered mind. Superficially, a sign for the good, I say, but in the midst of my optimism comes a public voice, a man named Meredith Nicholson who avers that we must "let Main Streets alone" or else hymn their "intelligence and praiseworthy curiosity as to things of good report." This is buncombe, of course, but unfortunately, the populace, once it has got over the passing fad of Main Street will loudly cheer Mr. Nicholson's opinion.

But my opponents will howl me down. They will tell me I am a prosaic clod who, left unshackled, would pluck romance and fantasy from their healthy individualities, close up Arcady and hand the little children text-books in sociology. They say I would preach them an artistic expression that is a repellent mass of earthy literalness. One gentleman of my acquaintance, a leader in industry, will read these lines, and smiling knowingly, will call me a "Red."

Well, indeed, I am not sure of anything. It is possible that my forefather, the Arab, has preceded me in wisdom.

Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from sounding my feeble note of warning.

Beware of the soothing syrups. Perhaps you have a child in rearing. When he was very young you did not overdose him with these syrups simply to stop his bawling. As he grows older he balks at divers nasty things that you force doggedly but sensibly down his throat, because you know them to be beneficial to his physical development. Now that he is coming to the age when he can get an objective on the hurly-burly of life, I suggest that you apply the same process to his education; I suggest, if it is not too late, that you apply it to your own.

## THE SOUTHERN PRESS

WHAT general indications have we of the South's cultural awakening? The awakening is a fact. Sporadically throughout the South, isolated groups or individuals are quickening to intellectual activity. Southern genius undoubtedly is again asserting itself in literature, art and thought.

But, after all, what indications have we of a *general* cultural awakening? The index of group consciousness is the daily press. Is there in any newspaper of the South any evidence whatever of an interest on the part of its readers in literature—which is to say, in thought? From reading the daily press of the South who could divine that the people of the South ever heard of a book?

The metropolitan newspapers of the

## EDITORIALS

North and East reflect the literature and art of those communities and of the nation. Excellent literary pages and supplements indicate a civilized interest in culture, in thought, in the amenities of the intellectual life. But in the South—what can one find in the newspapers to indicate that Southern people ever heard of a book?

The press of the South has in no way responded to the cultural awakening. Copy consists of news, cartoons, and advice to the lovelorn. There is no indication, or very little, that Southern people think or read, or that they are hospitable to thinkers, or writers, or artists. Occasionally one discovers

through an editorial that the editor is a civilized man who thinks and reads; that is about all. The papers proper, which are supposed to reflect the consciousness of the community, treat literature as if it did not exist.

*The Double Dealer* believes that the southern press is not culturally dead—merely sleepy. Sooner or later it must awake to the growing intelligence of its community. Sooner or later it must begin to reflect the higher forms of human endeavor, as the Eastern and Northern press has reflected them for generations. For the cultural quickening of the South is a fact. The demand for intellectual nutrition increases.

I tell you: one must still have chaos in one to give birth to a dancing star. I tell you ye have still chaos in you. Alas! There cometh the time when man will no longer give birth to any star. Alas! There cometh the time of the most despicable man who can no longer despise himself.—*Nietzsche*.

# Seven Days

By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING

## I. DECEMBER

We spoke of rain tangled with silver air  
Below driving cloud,  
But our thoughts were bewildered blossoms  
of the same tree  
Clinging hard against a Spring wind:  
We had come to apple-petals in a calendar  
of our own  
But we talked of winter weather.

## II. MEMORANDA.

It was you put a pool of purple light  
where I could plunge at will;  
It was you pinned the violet dawn  
to my finger.  
When distance is a dusk prairie between us  
with no road home  
I shall be needing this amethyst of yours  
for a lantern.  
That is why you may never have it  
back again  
To hide behind the wall of the big trunk  
that locks,  
Among other memoranda  
of lost loves.

## III "POOR TIRED PIGEON."

If you were not in the color of the wind  
today,  
Not in the gleam on the roads,  
If I missed you coming down the turnpike  
beyond the seven white birches,  
I had something to think about!  
It was that broken gray-blue light, that pity  
and humor  
Once when your eyes caught me up into  
their depths,  
When your hands smoothed the ruffled  
feathers of my thinking,  
When your voice loved me back to life with  
words I remember.

## IV CHEAP CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

Not chrysanthemums for me, however the  
price beckons!  
Hedge barberries strung on a bronze twig  
cost nothing at all.

Or if your whim require the Japanese,  
Why not a maple leaf with painted script of  
frost,  
Hokku written overnight  
About a lover who found the chrysanthemum  
moon  
Not for sale?

## V

### INTERVAL.

I have sat here wistful in the half-dusk  
Thinking of hills we watched at evening  
And of full pools  
Folded like gray roses  
After sundown,  
And of how the moon came leaning  
To show me bluebells in the crevice of the  
rock  
And that stillness  
In your eyes. . . .

## VI

### ALL I CAN MAKE YOU NOW.

All I can make you now  
Will not satisfy you:  
You are wanting a loveliness that should  
last.  
How long will it take for the light to reach  
me  
Of those stars you keep wishing  
Into my sky?

You will not have time  
To wait for me.  
Don't you know I would delay you with  
poems  
If I could?  
And one should be like a pomegranate  
Full of coral seeds,  
And one, like a night-sky throbbing with the  
passion  
Of your great stars.

## VII

### MONOTONOUS.

Not while you labor from gilt noon of a No-  
vember day  
Till ten o'clock of a brittle November night  
To carve my love like an enchanted ivory  
Into a shape less difficult for you to recog-  
nize!



# The White Calvary

By EDWIN CARLILE LITSEY

THE winter had been long and merciless to the furred and feathered knob dwellers of central Kentucky. Early in November the gates of the North swung open, and on one awful night of storm the icy wind sealed up every brook and pool and pond, while the snow which came just before buried under a twelve inch covering all grain and berries. Many of the birds wisely had sought a warmer climate weeks before, but many had remained, heedless of the warning offered by the frosty nights of late autumn. So food and drink were snatched from them in a night, for, unlike many of their fourfooted neighbors, they are not provident, and lay away no winter stores. Just how they lived during this bitter time it would be difficult to say. Probably alternate fasting and freezing, with occasional nocturnal flights to some barnyard where pigs or chickens were fed, in a desperate search for sustenance.

It was better for the fur bearers, though hard for them, too. The squirrel and chipmunk and maybe one or two others had a miscellaneous supply of food in their hiding places, but the opossum and rabbit and fox had nothing whatsoever laid by. They, too, had to live, and often it became a grievous and heart-breaking task, when all Nature seemed to conspire against their further existence. For ice-bound streams yield no water to thirsty little throats, and snow-covered fields and hills present nothing in the way of food.

Remote and lonely in the green season, when winter came these regions were the abode of perpetual silence. This year snow had followed snow with brief and inadequate melting periods between, and all animal life was held by a precarious tenure.

Far up the side of a precipitous knob a she fox had her home. Numerous small caves had formed along this knob in the process of time, and it was in one of these that the vixen had found a refuge. Whelps had come that spring, a litter of four, and the mother had plenty of business to attend to while they were young. It takes milk to rear baby foxes as it does baby humans, and there can be no milk without nourishment. Night after night the mother stole forth and prowled for food, and usually succeeded in her quest. The little foxes grew rapidly, and rolled and played happily about the floor of their den. Then one day a tragedy occurred, such as might happen to the well ordered lives of humans.

There were numerous ledges jutting out from the walls of the cave, and one day, in their aimless frolicking, two of the more adventurous puppies scrambled agilely up to one of these. Here, in the friendly scuffle which ensued, they dislodged a rather heavy stone lying there, which fell upon the back of a little brother who happened to be standing just beneath. Just how badly he was hurt they of course could not tell, but he yelped sharply with pain at first, and thereafter lay throughout the rest

of the day where he had fallen, whimpering now and again, but making no attempt to walk.

The mother fox was sleeping in a corner at the time of the accident, and accustomed as she was to snarls and barks from her offsprings, did not waken. That night when she came back from her hunting with food between her jaws, only three half starved little demons pounced upon her kill. She missed the fourth, and went nosing here and there in search, for the place was dark as a pit. Presently she came upon him, still lying where the stone had knocked him down. Her quick wit told her that something was wrong, but she could not tell what. For a few moments she hovered about her hurt child, while the other three were fighting over their feast, then she fell to licking the maltreated little form, which whined and moaned pitifully. The vixen made no effort to move him, as one of the cat tribe most probably would have done, but after a while lay down very close to him, in a protecting posture.

The little fox proved to be badly injured. He ate only at long intervals, and then sparingly. Time and again he would try to walk, but he only could get upon his fore feet. The chance blow had injured his spine, and he could not use his hind legs. And he stopped growing. The others passed quickly through puppyhood, and practically were grown by Fall. Then, lured by the wide outdoors, and urged by the inherited wander spirit, they took to roaming, and often were gone weeks at a time. The unexpected early snows caught them far from the scene of their nativity, and so the she fox and her crippled

child faced the rigors of this awful winter alone.

Few of us who live in the midst of civilization's comforts can realize the position in which the two were placed. The simple condition of living depended upon constant, resourceful and heroic effort. And with the snow nearly as high as her back on the level, and all sources of water icebound, the task merely of keeping alive required a dauntless heart and a fertile brain. Day after day she lay and watched in bright eyed mystification the dwarfed form which grew no larger, and which slept most of the time. The only progress of which it was capable was a laborious crawl. Of course the faithful mother could not understand what had come to pass but she knew that here was something which was helpless and dependent upon her entirely. And she arose to the responsibility.

Forage she must, or die. The demand upon her was not so great as when the whelps were babies, and just finding their legs. Well for her that it was not. She had learned to fast from sheer necessity, and the sick one never ate much, but there came times when hunger awoke within her so fiercely that she had to obey its call. Go we on four feet or two, Hunger is a master all of us must obey. With unerring intuition, she knew which routes to take that drifts and pits might be avoided. The hills were full of treacherous spots, and a false step at many points in her enforced wanderings would mean her death. Wild nature is not always kind to her wild creatures. Indeed, it would seem that at times she deliberately sets snares for their destruction.

Day after day and week after week of the merciless weather passed. All wild life huddled in its burrows or dens or clefts or crannies. The opossums and racoons and squirrels stayed in their homes in the hollows of trees; the groundhogs and chipmunks hibernated in their hidden rooms; the skunks and weasels and minks and foxes lay close in their respective dens, all waiting for the south wind which meant a thaw, liberation, and renewed life and freedom.

One afternoon near the middle of February the vixen, curled on the floor of her cave in somnolent ease, suddenly lifted her sharp muzzle, while her nostrils twitched. It was not a sound which had aroused her. But as she lay with half closed eyes fastened upon the broken body of the puppy which would not grow, a peculiarly fresh scent had come to her trained olfactory nerves. It was a moist wafture reminiscent of spring, laden with the odor of damp earth. Swiftly as thought and silently as a shadow she arose, and stole on padded feet to the entrance of her home. There she stood and scanned the perspective of vast solitudes, and the sky above. The clouds were low and leaden, and the intense cold had lessened. Was relief coming at last? Even as she gazed powdery snow began falling. She went back in her den and lay down once more, and began to gnaw the dry bones of a rabbit she had caught three days before.

After a while darkness settled down. It snowed till near midnight, then the wind veered, and it grew colder. Colder and colder, until the she fox awakened and went and curled her body about her

helpless offspring, seeking and giving warmth at the same time.

The next day the puppy whined at intervals throughout the long, cheerless hours, but whether from cold, pain or hunger the mother did not know. But her own plight was becoming desperate again, for the sharp teeth of famine worried her worn frame. About dusk the puppy dragged itself to the closest rabbit bone and began to lick it, trembling from weakness as it did so. This act decided the vixen. She might wait another day herself, with the aid of merciful sleep, but her child was starving before her eyes. Food must be obtained for it, and that quickly. It was a problem huge enough to overcome the bravest heart.

Night again, with a sky from which the wind had blown every vestige of cloud; a sky brilliant with white, cold stars and lighted pallidly by a frozen moon. As the mother fox stepped softly without to start upon her perilous errand of mercy and love, it seemed that a dead world encompassed her. Snow everywhere, and cold so intense that it hit her throat when she breathed. A thin, knife-like wind was eddying through the valleys and along the slopes, and it raised in little ridges the reddish brown fur on the gaunt body of the vixen. She shivered involuntarily, cast a look at the black opening behind her, then started forward upon her adventure.

An outjutting ledge of stone ran along the knob parallel with her cave for a great distance. Under this ledge there was little snow, and it was this path the she fox took first. Its shelter might well have seemed a refuge to some hard



pressed wood dweller, so the shadowy form moved cautiously, every nerve on the alert. Rod after rod she trotted, but encountered no encouragement. Eyes, ears or nose conveyed no welcome intelligence to her brain. It seemed as though the whole world was dead and wrapped in white, and that she was the only living thing in it.

At last the protecting ledge dwindled away and disappeared, and she stood facing limitless, inhospitable areas of snow. Nothing moved, nothing called, nothing stirred. Icy stillness, desolation, despair. Where should she go, and whither should she turn? It was all one, for the search was blind. The familiar paths and trails she had known of old were gone, blocked, obliterated. Perplexed and desperate, the she fox turned her gaze toward the top of the knob, not far off from where she stood. Instantly her body stiffened and sank half way to earth, as though seeking concealment. The crest toward which she gazed was roughly conical in shape, and almost bare of vegetation. What little there was stood stripped and bare. Near the center of the rounded top was the stump of a tree which some former storm had overthrown. This stump perhaps was four feet high, and on its top sat that which had caused the starved raider below to grow rigid, while saliva oozed from her shut mouth, to freeze before it could drop from her jaw.

A great hoot owl was roosting there. Clear against the sky his form was outlined, still as though carved from stone. Was he sleeping, or on the lookout? He was a night hunter, and for him, too, the winter had been hard. Any moment

he might leave his perch. The she fox knew this, and she knew further that quick and noiseless action on her part was imperative. Was he facing her, or not? That was another question of vital importance, for her dark body would show plainly against the white background she must traverse. From where she stood to her objective point the snow was not so deep, for the exposed position of the knob's crest had allowed the wind to sweep it rather clean. But enough remained to betray her.

Straining her preternaturally keen eyes, the vixen focussed them upon the owl's head. The moon shone full upon it, and then the she fox saw that no beak or eye tufts were visible. Luck had come at last; the bird's back was toward her. A little rain-washed gully led upward from almost at her feet. She took and followed it as far as it went, then there was twenty or thirty feet of bare, open space, shining brightly with crystals of snow. It was a white and perilous way, but she must follow it, quickly.

Crouching so that her belly brushed the little drifts, she crept forward, forward, swiftly and more swiftly. While she was yet twice her length from the stump the great bird moved, and slowly turned its head. Instantly its big wings quivered, but stiff from cold, they opened slowly. The delay was long enough. Like arrow from bow the vixen leaped. Weakened by privation and fasting, she sprang short, but her vise-like teeth found and closed over one leg of the huge owl. Down they came together, the one silent and determined, the other with wildly flapping wings and clack-



ing beak and ripping, thrusting talons. Over and over the top of the knob they threshed, enveloped in a cloud of fine white crystals which their struggles created. Then directly—both disappeared. Their blind efforts had carried

them over a cliff's edge, into a pit of drifted snow a half score feet in depth.

And the stars were tapers, and the moon a priest, while the wind sang an eerie requiem for the sacrifice.

## Like Some North-Coast Adventurer of Old

By GUSTAV DAVIDSON

Like some north-coast adventurer of old  
Upon a tempest-tossed and darkling sea  
Guiding his troubled sail as dauntlessly,  
Through mist, through lashing wave,  
    through dark, through cold,  
As though the elements could not withhold  
This spirit from its port of destiny  
Whither it moves so steadfast and so free,  
Fearless of shipwreck, confident and bold.

Thus do I hail you, Captain, Commodore!  
Watching your gallant prow as o'er the deep  
It plunges onward to the farther shore.  
Within your eyes that will not yield to sleep  
There shines a Light, O helmsman at the fore!  
And in your heart the ancient grandeurs keep.

# The Curse of Things

By STEPHEN TA VAN

IT lay heavily, the Curse of things, upon the house where I was born; that tall brick dwelling, guarded thickly by elms and maples, on gloomy Hesketh Street in the most aristocratic neighborhood of Ware.

The period was Victorian. The house had been built extravagantly, not long before the war to which all good New Englanders referred, then and thereafter for many years, as the Rebellion. The rooms were high and large, plastered, with woodwork of black walnut and fluted marble fireplaces, unreasonably heavy and ornate. Parlors, dining-room and bedrooms occupied nine tenths of the space, while service arrangements had been crowded into dark and narrow corners. Only the basement kitchen had resisted the subordination of comfort to splendor. With its opulent built-in range, it was of a capacity to supply the needs and withstand the onslaughts of Pilgrim-descended owners, who were plethoric trenchermen and entertainers.

Rich and plentiful were the furnishings. Every corner had its "handsome" chair or table, and every table its vase or statuette in bronze or marble. Apollo Belvidere opposed Ajax Telamon, and in the stairway-niche, backed by starry blue, stood a draped and crowded, three-quarters life-size figure called without certainty Diana.

The first impression in the principal parlor was of a Roman-gold sunburst. Paintings in oil infested the walls, each portrait or landscape surrounded by a

massive intrenchment of gilt, against which its dark colors struggled well-nigh hopelessly.

The landscapes had the appearance of purchase by the yard. Several of the portraits had been perpetrated in partnership, that is: a pair of painters had collaborated, one attacking the face, the other the clothes and background of the sitter. Both of my maternal great-grandfathers had submitted to this wholesale rendering, with startling outcomes; but the most astounding triumph of collective portraiture hung in an upper chamber, where Great-Uncle Enoch, aetat. eight, sat pensively in long strapped breeches, over a lopeared cat.

From cornices above the windows depended heavy curtains, the mantel had its drapery, the furniture was upholstered heavily in plush. Expensive ornaments were everywhere; an inventory would have resembled a museum's catalogue.

Each ornament and piece of furniture was historical, inseparably bound up with family events. In the low wicker chair Aunt Margaret had liked to sit, before she eloped with the Bishop's son, and died in Denver in a manner described whisperingly by the women. The bronze urn had been brought by Cousin George from Italy, the clock was souvenir of a wedding-trip to France.

All of these possessions were cared for meticulously—were dusted, polished, nursed with a morbid assiduity. In addition there were many chattels

which required special worship and reposed usually in safer quarters; elaborate silver sets and salvers, for example, brought out only upon state occasions, from the bank's vault.

An expedition to the bank, and the subsequent return, with mysterious precautions, took on the aspect of the secret transfer of a beloved idol.

Damage to any treasure was a tragedy, remembered through the years. Never shall I forget the breakage of "Aunt Ellen's little Wedgwood pitcher," a pure accident. One would have thought I had shattered her honor, and I have no doubt that she grieved, poor soul, for the knickknack, to her dying day.

The attachment to Things extended to clothing and trifles. Old garments were treasured, a pocket-knife was a permanence, its loss a woe. Women preserved in moth-balls not only their wedding gowns, but their husbands' wedding trousers. In the nursery, emotional fireworks were frequent.

"Oh, oh, just see! You have broken the nice, nice horsie!" was merely the beginning of a long sermon on the sensitive nature of toy horses and the enormity of breaking them.

It was in general a sentimental time, the flower day of "Locksley Hall" and virtuous Mr. Gladstone in England, of Longfellow and his associate Pundits in America. Children were allowed, nay encouraged, to read the Rollo, Elsie and Franconia books, and haled to church to bow down before the nightmare of a gigantic purple-bearded School Principal.

The home I have described was one of culture. Its fetiches included no gha-

ly Rogers Groups, no Othello-and-Desdemona chromo framed in plush, or hardwood floors with Turkish pit-falls strewn on them; no cosy corners, pianolamps, or tidies. In nearby neighborhoods all of those abominations flourished, and the farther down the social scale you went, within a medium, the more hideous furnishings you found, accompanied by as desperate a devotion.

We laugh at the simple-mindedness of the Victorians, but have we improved on them in fact, or only after a fashion?

In one of his labored analyses Theodore Dreiser writes of the typical American's frenzied ambition to "build himself a stuffy home to take the count in." I think that Dreiser in his muffled brilliance has hinted a great truth; the constant, frightened endeavor of the second rate intelligence to fight off dissolution by surrounding itself with Things.

The American only imagines that he builds his stuffy house to die in. In truth he builds it, and fills it and his mind with paraphernalia, in order to lure himself into the delusion that he is thereby protected against the death that has arrived inevitably in every case save his. Bolstering pretense with pretense, he comes to consider the house his coffin in name only. He carves it, polishes it, ornaments it with silver handles and bedecks it with flowers. He pats it on the sides and lid, and says to it, "Good coffin!" thinking by familiarity to wheedle away the curse. Tending and refining it, he nearly persuades himself that he has changed its character; but it turns out to be a coffin, after all, and he has been a funeral-hound essentially, as were those Victorian relatives of mine, and their friends, who patronized

the actual funeral and death-bed with a different ritual of naive hypocrisy.

Life is no more than a symbol, of which the spirit's music is the sound of a bugle in a distant valley, faint and elusive if heard at all. All Things are symbols, mocking when conceived as facts. There is no drably-drearier exhibit than a traveller down the slope which my dear Aunt Ellen was wont to call "the shady side of Life," frenetically clutching at bright pebbles on the descent—whether they be the pebbles of Doctor Crane or those of Cartier, Bendel or Gunther, fine words, fine jewels or rich clothes. The pebbles grow dull, the traveller rubs them and strives to bring their polish back, or discards them to grasp at others. The path grows steeper, all the pebbles fade. There is consternation, terror, the shriek, then the last crazy flurry in the dark.

Asceticism, the grim avoidance of Things, has also had its vogue whenever there was opportunity. Only yesterday Thoreau—a New Englander willy-nilly—went out into the woods to be away from them, not too successfully.

Why have people been afraid of Things? They are not dreadful, if their sting be drawn. It is the fear of them that curses.

In that New England environment of my boyhood, I was continually warned not only against impiety and breakage, but against wastage in the sense of expenditure.

"You must be careful, you must learn the value of money," my mentors impressed on me.

They were not stingy, but over them hung the cold fear of losing the con-

comitants of luxury, of being separated from the mass of chattels and friendships with which they had managed to surround themselves. They could visualize only with scorn and disgust an existence unsupported by contact with a great number of respectable Things, animate and otherwise.

The favorite phrase "the value of money" really connoted finance less exactly than solidity of social habit. Of the value of money in exchange for imagination, they know next to nothing.

I remember the apposite case of "poor Amy." Returning to visit in Ware after a long absence, I heard reference made pityingly to Amy Sawyer, second daughter of the major pillar of a prominent family. In reply to casual inquiry I was told that the attractive but unfortunate girl had married worthlessly.

Of excellent social connections, amiable, willing, faithful, the husband had proved a complete failure in the Sawyer clock factory, into which he had been inducted in accordance with time-honored family policy. He was industrious enough, but possessed not an atom of executive ability. A trial with the allied Rubber Company was equally futile. Roger simply didn't fit, and the Sawyers were "terribly mortified."

The initial mortification, however, was a bagatelle compared to that which afflicted them when Roger finally "took hold." For what should he and Amy do but find and lease an old, ramshackle country inn, and go to catering in it to motorists! . . . A daughter of Sawyers! A couple of exclusive Ware, selling food to tourists!

Further inquiry developed the facts that the project was successful practic-



ally; that the outrageous couple were happy and their offspring healthy; that the performance had been, in brief, the fortunate transfer of intelligent persons from an environment unsuited to their development, to one which was favorable.

This aspect of the situation failed utterly to appeal to my good friends, who continued to drip pity and condolence. What a maddening experience, they exclaimed for Madam Sawyer, driving pleasantly along a country turnpike, to send her chauffeur into a common hostility to telephone, and encounter her grand-daughter in charge, and the graceless young woman's husband drawing gasoline for vulgar New York Jews! Doubtless Amy and her young man, in their hostelry, were surrounded by half as many things as Madam Sawyer, but the things they had were tools, not mere possession. Instead of building up a castle of illusion they used them as aids to continued effort which they chanced to find worth while. The curse was off.

Personally I am not fond of inns, from the inn-side, and as to the Romany Life—the gay freedom of fields and woods, and all that—when anyone cries Ho! for it, I squint the eyes and consider. Having done some gypsying (as well as innkeeping), I am in the Missouri attitude with regard to those pursuits. I opine quite frankly that as War is hell, so is vagabondage mostly degenerate in fact and nonsensical in fancy. I hold the opinion for the same reason that I think a republic an anomaly, democracy a lie; Blasco Ibañez a third-rate novelist, "Jurgen" somewhat overrated by the supposedly judicious; Mencken in danger (if he be not wary)

of being dulled in his fine edge by that damned college-praise; Mr. Ford and Mr. Edison colossal asses, outside of their respective special fields. I think so, that is, because the evidence seems to me to warrant it.

But as I have admitted, such opinions are largely personal, and my point is, as in Amy's case, that Things should be handled as tools, not elevated to the place of purposes.

For example, it would seem to me an admission of failure, to be flabbergasted at the age of seventy, after having collected much property and many social affiliations, by the simple insertion of an unexpected hour of time.

That was what happened to my pompous great-uncle Enoch—he who was painted, long before, over the cat—when on descending from his chamber of a sunny morning, he discovered that owing to an error in eyesight he had dressed an hour earlier than was his custom. He did not know how to employ the extra time, and the contretemps upset him for several days.

He was of kindred calibre with Stephen Bayne, a contemporary prop of Ware society. Stephen, whose proclivities were sporting, rented his mansion to a stranger for the season which he himself had planned to spend at Saratoga. The alien, finding Ware's reception chilly, decamped after a week. When the returning owner was asked to comment on the departure, he said it was not surprising.

"A man of no breadth, like that," said Stephen puffing contemptuously. "Didn't drink, couldn't play billiards—had no resources within himself. No wonder he left a real man's house."

They were gregarious, those old frock-coated fellows, meeting every pleasant afternoon to the number of a baker's dozen or so at Hugh McPhelimy's historic groggery, where they stood and nodded gravely, like sea-cows with toddies in their flippers. Completely creatures of habit and environment, they resented the slightest infraction of their routine, and might have gasped themselves into apoplexy at the suggestion of a shift to a different pool.

Few, to whom the experience has not actually come, can realize how advantageously a sweeping change of Things may be made. We are so stiffly hedged about by a fence of the old picket-saws: Waste Not, Want Not; Look Before You Leap; Old Friends Are Best. Most of the saws are false, and for each a contrary proverb can be found, but we continue to be held in check by them.

Then there are the Sentimentalities to be regarded: All mothers are good; all dogs are faithful; lawyers are wise, physicians skilful, business-men efficient, actors brilliant; these—here United States are the Land of the Free and Home of the Brave, and all denizens have equal opportunities. No foreign country could successfully invade us, so why worry? It is all right for a married couple to live together no matter how they fight, but God always hates the peaceful union unratified by law. All non-Christians are Heathen, etc., etc.

These conventions hold us down, like Gulliver restrained by the million threads of the Lilliputians. We remain in a gloomy, inconvenient, unhealthful house for twenty years because Grandfather built it, and miss a chance to go

to Europe because there would be no one left to take care of Wishbone, the Airdale, if we went. Chicago has the reputation of being noisy, so we refrain from moving there to follow up a business opening.

I once lost all my money and all my friends, and became so sick that I could not stand, into the bargain. To an extent I recommend the catastrophe. Friends that you can lose easily are better lost, and you never know how easily you can lose most of those you have, until you have tried it, or how eagerly they will try to come back, later on. Money is of no service unless you can make more; stagnant, it dies on your hands and rots. Sickness is bad, but during the fight for recovery you learn that medical science advanced about as far as it could in the days of the Moors, and health really depends, in both ways, on what the football coach calls guts.

Plus intelligence. The curse of Things cannot be fought, in any of its phases, with the emotions; it must be educated out. In some individual cases, education is successful. I wonder if it can ever succeed generally. Dreiser evidently thinks not . . . There are the college types. But I know college Idols—speechifiers—who keep libraries for the print and bindings, and the Yale seniors used to laugh, as at an actor's joke, when Sumner said he thought there could be no such thing as long-continued happiness.

Perhaps the majority can never be raised beyond reasonable sanitation and a cessation of paper-strewing in the public parks. Always there must be rules, you can never get discrimina-

tion, recognition of relative values, a sense of proportion. . . Well, the Puritans could never learn that the body of a beautiful woman should be clothed, next to the skin, with the most delicate silks. . . They cannot learn it now. Wasteful economy, mediocrity, bigotry, respectability, the terrible magazines, books, movies, heavy food, quarrels—

Only for the Fortunate the importance of those weights recedes, and death itself seems not to matter much, when the curse of Things is lifted. The man, among those whom I have known, who valued Things the least, and got the most from them, worked busily till he was eighty-five, and died then, unexpectedly, in his sleep without a quiver.

## The House

By ARTHUR SYMONS

"Why do you batter down the walls of my house?"

I shouted to one as I stood on the top of my roof.

He stopped his battering and said with an air of reproof:

"I always hated you because you stand aloof,

And because you sit drinking wine in the shadow of the boughs."

At that there arose a clamour of the crows

And all the air was darkened with their wings.

I lifted the wine to my lips in a heavenly drowse.

And then I cast off all thought of material things.

So he that hated the clamour of the crows

Stopped, slept, and left off battering at my house.

# A Criminal Trial in the Delta

By DAVID COHN

IT is a Friday afternoon in a tiny village on the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley Railroad in Mississippi. Gathered in the central meeting place of the village—Sanders' general store—are several neighboring planters, Sanders and his two sons, Mr. McGee, a planter, who serves as magistrate of the district, and a deputy sheriff. The men lean or sit on the counters and talk politics, hard times, baseball, the cotton crop, and more enthusiastically, the devastating and withering qualities of the current "white lightning," "white mule," or just plain "corn," as the local moonshine whiskey is called. Beneath the conversation and running through it is an undertone of tension, and the gathering of a slow, fretful impatience. There is to be the trial of a nigger at two o'clock, and the several fat watches reposing in moist, calloused palms indicate that it is twenty minutes past two. The deputy peers anxiously out of the back door of the store in the direction from which the Prosecuting Attorney will come bringing with him the prisoner who has been held in the only secure house of detention for miles around—the Ashville jail, distant fifteen miles.

Suddenly a Ford rattles over a rickety bridge in front of the store and grinds to an abrupt stop. From it emerge the Prosecuting Attorney, a deputy and the prisoner; the latter a middle aged, slender, black negro, handcuffed and dressed in the conventional overalls of the

plantation. The little group of men in the store now come out into the back yard, and the Judge, the Prosecutor and prisoner seat themselves on cracker boxes and Coca-Cola cases placed amid the miscellaneous litter thrown out of the store. Under a cloudless sky and in a musical comedy setting they begin a criminal trial to decide whether a man shall be deprived of his liberty for a space of months, separated from his family and uprooted from the scene of his labor which is now approaching fruition after a half-year of toil.

"... out of a spirit of revenge one Tobe Hanes did wilfully and maliciously beat and injure said mule."

"Tobe, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"What's dat you say, Boss?"

Patiently and with the quiet understanding of a veteran teacher instructing a hopelessly stupid child, the Prosecutor explains to the negro the character of the crime with which he is charged; that it is his privilege to plead guilty or not guilty and to discharge the witnesses beyond earshot of the proceedings. The prisoner avails himself of this right and pleads not guilty.

The first witness is Mr. Buck Henry, who manages the plantation on which the defendant had been a tenant. Mr. Buck is a small wiry man clad in corduroy trousers and cap and a gray cotton sweater worn loosely over a khaki shirt open at the throat. His gray eyes are kindly and there is about him a simplicity of speech and manner born of long



years spent amid broad fields with tillers of the soil. He seats himself on a cracker box and tells his story in a few words.

"Tobe here came to me about two weeks ago and asked for ten dollars which I refused to give him because there was nothing owing him. Two days later he rode off on one of the mules belonging to the place, and when I heard he had come back I went down to his house to get the mule. The mule's ear was broken and hanging down, deep cuts were all over its back and sides, both eyes were closed, and it was lame and in bad shape generally. I asked Tobe how come the mule's ear was that way and he said he didn't know, and I then took the mule away and had him doctored up. Yes, when Tobe rode off the mule was in first class shape."

A deputy calls loudly for the next witness—Sweetenin Simpson. Sweetenin, a slim, shiny, black boy, shyly comes from around a corner of the store, removes his hat and timidly ventures within the charmed circle of the white folks. He wears a blue cotton shirt and overalls, and as a concession to the gala occasion his feet are shod in tan button shoes above the tops of which his overalls are pulled so that an awed world may gaze upon the splendor of socks cerulean blue. Sweetenin fixes his gaze upon an empty sardine can on the ground and is plainly ill at ease, although a tiny smile about the corner of his mouth shows that he is enjoying the notoriety that springs from being a witness in a criminal trial and from exciting the hopeless envy of the negro spectators who hover on the edge of the gathering.

"Boss, mah right name is Sonny Lindsay but de white folks dey calls me Sweetenin Simpson. White folks, ah sho doan know nuthin 'bout dis case 'cep whut Ah seed an heerd de udder niggers say dat Tobe had done run off on one of Mr. Buck's mules, and had lef his wife and chillun ter pick de crop. Us was pickin cotton soon one mawnin when us seed Tobe comin back on de critter, an he sho wuz a sight wid his year drappin down lak hit wuz broke an blood all over an stove up a sight. Yassir, has time fo dat dat Ah seed dat mule warn't nuthin ailin him."

Sweetenin rises and grinning broadly retreats until he has merged himself indistinguishably in the group of darky onlookers. From this place of vantage he looks and listens with avidity as a spectator, the while he basks in the sudden and fleeting fame that has come to him as a participant in a local *cause celebre*.

"Tobe," says the Prosecutor, "just tell the Judge here all you know about this mule being in this condition."

For a few minutes Tobe says nothing. He gazes away to the white ribbon of road that stretches to his cabin in the woods, and he sees with unblinking eyes four little black boys, bare of head and feet who are eating little golden heaps of persimmons as they walk along. He looks beyond the boys to the fields white with cotton; cotton soon to be picked by his kind and converted into money for the purchase of circus tickets, gold teeth, Chicago clothing, and unguents possessing the power of making the hair straight and shiny. A cow bell tinkles in a nearby pasture and

the sound seems to awaken Tobe's slumbering mind.

"Boss, Ah aims to tell de troof an nuthin else. Ah'm er ole nigger an bofe white folks an cullud will say dat Tobe Hanes inginerally speaks de troof. Ah did ax Mr. Buck for a loan of ten dollars ter hope buy us some vittles till us had done ginned some cotton and got de seed money. Mr. Buck said dat dare warn't nuthin comin to me and bofe white folks and niggers would have ter do bes dey could twel de money skacity wuz over.

"Naw, Sir, Ah didn't git mad at Mr. Buck wen he tole me dat, but Ah says to mahself, 'Ole nigger you got to git out of here and git somepin ter do.' Den Ah comes on back to mah house, saddles de mule and rides him ter Ashville where Ah works on de streets fer two or three days an den Ah goes over to Mr. Johnson's and hopes him ter chop bushes out de grudge ditches."

"Ah lef fum dare bout midnight aim-in ter git back ter Mr. Buck's fo sun-up an ter do dat Ah had ter cut thoo de swamp."

The white folks gaze at the negro with incredulous eyes and wonder what amazing story of hoodooism will come from his lips. They are sure that he cannot concoct any story that will overcome the weight of testimony against him and await the close of the trial with amused impatience. The Judge asks a trivial question and Tobe resumes his story.

"Seems lak Ah hadn't gone fur an ez Ah wuz ridin' along an warn't payin' no mind ter nuthin' in partickler—jes ridin'—Ah heard somepin crack and fo Ah knowed it er hackberry tree had

done busted off an fell on de mule. Jes ez Ah heered de crackin' Ah whirled 'roun and jumped offen de critter and you could see dar whar a limb er dat tree struck me." (Indicating a slightly blackened spot on a grimy fingernail.)

"Yassir, dat sho is whut hit done. Ef Ah hadn't er jumped off Ah reckon Ah could er got kilt graveyard dead. Sho looks like de good Lawd wuz lookin' out and hopin ole nigger. Yassir, Jedge, Ah sho could show you dat tree out dar in de swamp ef nobody ain't moved hit, an dat is de Lawd's troof how come dat critter ter git hurt."

There are no other witnesses and the Prosecutor makes a short speech in which he comments on the wild improbability of the negro's story, points out a possible motive which led him to beat the mule, and rests the case for the state.

The Judge walks over to inspect the mule which is tethered to a tree a few steps away, and then resumes his seat on the Coca Cola case. He is a fat, kindly, inert man with graying hair and placid brown eyes set shallowly in a broad forehead above a mouth unmagisterial in its obvious quality of indecision. He rakes the ground with a heavy walking cane and glances at the prisoner. Silence descends on the gathering. A negro funeral procession comes into view on the broad road and absorbs the attention of all until it vanishes in the dust and golden haze of the late October afternoon. A mockingbird sings a few vagrant notes from a thorn tree, and a flock of homing blackbirds fly overhead chattering noisily. From a nearby thicket the sharp clear whistle of a partridge falls

upon the ear. It is followed by a sound familiar to all the countryside at dusk—"soo cow"—and soon the creator of the cry comes into view—a little, ragged negro boy, his black breast showing through a tattered shirt. He drives before him a lean milch cow and a yellow cur and he sings as he goes. The setting sun shoots gleaming rays from the windows of the negro church across the road and gilds to gold its opulent display of lightning rods. The darky onlookers are silent as death, save only Pocahontas Johnson who has deserted her supper biscuits and who now ventures an awed whisper into the sable ear of Sonny Vance. The white folks, too, are silent as they speculate upon the severity of the sentence that the Judge will undoubtedly impose.

The eyes of Judge McGee wander away to the woods now deep blue in the rapidly fading light, and come to rest upon the prisoner who sits silently and stoically upon the box, wrapped in the mantle of the strange, impenetrable and inscrutable impassivity of his race. He rakes up little piles of dust with his heavy cane and scatters them again and gathers the dust once more in tiny hills. Then he speaks.

"The evidence in this case, gentlemen, is certainly tolerable peculiar, but I don't believe that this old nigger is lying. Not guilty."

•   •   •   •   •  
Upon hearing the decision of the Court, the negro spectators look pityingly at the man who has been fooled by a plain old cornfield negro who in their opinion was guilty beyond all reasonable doubt. They have little respect for any white man whose mind

could be influenced by such an obviously concocted story, but they are not surprised at the outcome of the trial. It is a familiar phenomenon to them—this spectacle of a guilty member of their race escaping punishment at the hands of lenient white judges who regard the petty crimes of negroes in the manner that they look upon the mischievous acts of wayward children. They leave the scene of the trial which they thoroughly enjoyed as living, pulsing drama in which one of their kind was the leading and most skilful player; a drama which ran smoothly and without hitch to an end foreknown by all of them, and, therefore, supremely satisfying.

The planters and storekeepers, however, are hugely disgusted and they regard the Court's decision as a miscarriage of justice resulting in the freeing of a man who richly deserved punishment. But they do not feel indignant toward the Judge nor incensed at the defendant. Their daily relations with plantation negroes and their almost daily condoning and forgiving of slight offenses committed by their field workers make them very tolerant of the shortcomings of the blacks. To their minds their tenants and employees are merely adults without the powers of inhibition and resistance possessed by adults of other races—men and women whose ideas of right and wrong are very hazy in respect to the lesser crimes and misdemeanors. Every negro knows that it is wrong to kill a human being, but how many think that it is wrong to "tote" food from the white folk's kitchen, "toting" being a recognized form of graft? The planters forgive these people as one forgives a little boy



for stealing a handful of plums or titude of the white men who live in smashing a toy train in a moment of close touch with the rural negro: petulance and childish anger. "Well, what can you do with a nigger?"

Mr. Sanders pithily sums up the at-

## A Limousine Passes

By MARY CARMACK McDOUGAL

There was hell-for-two in the long glistening gray limousine which rolled past the corner where ordinary people waited for their street cars.

A woman who stood there figuring on whether to buy a new rug for the dining-room, and make the old curtains do, or to buy new curtains and make the old rug do; saw only a big car with a man and woman in the back seat.

"They have a cylinder missing," thought the dark, unshaven man on the curb. "I wonder if their stupid-looking chauffeur knows it."

"What a dear veil that rich girl has on," a waitress who was all yellow angles, said to herself. And she fell to wondering how John would like her with one done so, under her chin.

"The young man does not look happy," thought the woman in black.

"Gee, ain't that a peach of a car!" shrilled the freckled boy to his companion. "I'll soon have enough money saved up to get that motor wheel for my bicycle. Then won't I show them some speed!"

The short, square-jawed chap carrying the fat sample case threw back his shoulders with the determination: "My little wifie is going to have an auto like that some day, by George!"

"Them swells ride around in their cars when other folks are starving. I'd like to smash that glass in their faces," was the thought that struck through the mind of the man in the shabby slouch hat.

The sun flung itself against the polished body of the long car, and flashed dazzlingly back past a baby held by a tired woman. It blinked and chuckled and grabbed after the light with faty creased hands.

And in the gray limousine as it rolled by, sat the man and woman in their own little upholstered hell-for-two.



# The Ecstasy

By HANIEL LONG

THE mask is one form of release, of ecstasy; it makes one strange to oneself. Among the forms of ecstasy none is more highly spoken of than nakedness and moonlight; and it was this thought which crossed Rainaldo's mind as, carefully masked, he stepped naked into the night. At the same moment in her father's garden not a mile away, Isotta, unmasked, and in a gown of silver, was flaunting her slenderness in the face of a rising moon. But Isotta did it without reflecting; she liked to steal out to the olive trees in the dark silence, and dream of death.

Isotta was a village girl, but she was not without access to large truths and larger emotions, and she had concluded that adoration and death are the only realities. As for Rainaldo, he was at this time very young; but he had dreams, he believed in *belomancy*. Like the king of Babylon he made his arrows bright, and on this occasion he was off to try the omens as to his future.

The young cavalier took his stand by the oak tree which marks the southern apex of his hereditary estate; and there, having made obeisance to the moon, he recited the ritual prescribed in the black art of *belomancy*.

"I am not the Marchese di Cavelli, I am not the son of a Christian mother; I am a follower of shadows, a creature of the night! I am the offspring of Hunger and Thirst, the child of Destruction. I stride across mountains; the plains are but dust for my chariot. I

slay where and whom I will; I go about ravishing and I pillage without quarter. The presences of the night support me; behold, I shoot my arrows once, twice and three times, and damned be he who comes between me and the revelation."

When the third arrow had left the argent bow, Rainaldo made obeisance to the moon again, and then with the hot speed of those who, having acknowledged the supernatural, expect the supernatural to acknowledge them, he set off in pursuit of omens. He had sent his bolts down over the crest of the hill, aiming them carefully between the squat darknesses of two oaks, as between two terrors. For the young man had walked abroad too often in the night not to be affected by moonlit trees; he had indeed written a monograph on the ghostly cypress. And to-night, even had he left the villa sane, he could not fail to mark a tremor which ran through and through the citadel of sanity at sight of the mystic oaks.

He found the first arrow in a clear space above the olive orchard. It had struck against a rock and had shivered to pieces. Rainaldo threw his hand to his forehead and hurried on. The second arrow had pierced an olive tree some seven inches from the ground, and at an angle, as he calculated by his circles, of thirty-seven degrees. It was something. He noted the reverse direction of the arrow; the straight thread of space led him to a particularly bright star at some distance below the Cross. Could it be Venus? From Venus to

the heart of an olive tree at thirty-seven degrees! It was a dubious enterprise.

But where was the third arrow? He passed and repassed the path into the orchard, walking a few steps in either direction; but he could not espy it. Peering with a start at a gnarled and ancient bush, he beheld what he had not expected, a white shape. Was it a ghost? Was it a girl? It was a girl, as real there in the shadow as white thunder in piled clouds. Her black hair hung over her shoulders, and she seemed suspended in a trance.

Rainaldo, trembling, drew near. She gazed at him; she was beautiful. And forgetting that he was masked, and therefore, not a particular young man but any young man at all; and, forgetting, too, that by his ritual he had pronounced himself a beast and king of beasts, Rainaldo, with a moan, fell down on his knees three paces from her, and pressed his forehead into the ground.

Who knows why the most resolute barbarians falter when face to face with the unearthly? It is a thing to be charged against Beauty that she breaks our will. The brute bends to the beautiful, and that is the end of the brute. Yet Rainaldo was not engaged in reflection. He enjoyed no discourse, whether of reason or of madness, for he had forgotten the night, the missing arrow, belomancy and himself. He was transported to the bosom of a cloud, and the cloud moved and lived and was the heart of life.

Then the maiden spoke. "Why have you slain me?" Her low voice contained no reproach; it was merely wonder, as caressing the silver arrow

in her side, she slipped to her knees and fell lengthwise upon the earth.

Rainaldo was appalled. Whatever vague and criminal notions might have been his as he shot the third arrow into the silver night, he had never dreamt of its piercing a maiden's side. Then that was what it all came to, the arduous pursuit of magic.

It is proverbial that the mothers of boys who practise belomancy are endowed by nature with what is known as second sight. Rainaldo had always viewed this trait in his mother with distaste, for what is the pleasure of being near a person who reads your thoughts like a book, and forecasts every day of your life? Yet now beside a dead girl in the moonlight, he thought of his mother with intolerable relief.

He dared not pluck the arrow from the girl's side, for fear her life should follow it; a dead girl may be restored to life, but not if blood has been shed. The young man gathered her in his arms, and retraced his steps up the hill. Three times on the journey to the villa he paused to rest; and each time he gazed in agony at what he bore. When he had arrived in his own chamber, he deposited his precious burden on the magian couch, drawing about the maiden a triple circle thrice.

This done, he hastened to his mother. The aged woman, starting from sleep, and beholding her son come naked and masked into her chamber, sat up in bed to learn what was amiss.

Rainaldo beckoned her in agitation. She threw about her shoulders a heavy robe.

"There is poetry in the world," muttered the dame, as she followed him un-

certainly, "and there is also prose. It is poetry to lie asleep in the dead of night; it is prose to be rudely awakened. There is sense in the world; there is also nonsense. We shall see!"

The corridor traversed, they entered the room of the magian couch. The Marchesa gazed at the silent form.

"Did you think you had to do it?" she inquired, turning to her son.

Rainaldo struck his forehead with his palms.

"Fetch me a glass of water," said his mother.

No sooner had he gone than the Marchesa took the girl's hand and said to her, "What does this mean, child?"

Isotta replied, without moving her lips, "I love him and he has slain me."

"He has slain you only metaphorically," said the Marchesa, kindly. "This is the result of too much belomancy."

The maiden lay still as death, her eyelids heavy.

The Marchesa murmured, "It is a question, whether these aimless practices have not too much glamor. Even figures of speech are dangerous."

"What matter, if I am slain?" sighed the girl.

"Tut, child. To live, to die, to live again, these are but empty words."

"And is he to go on living?"

"Ah, not at all. He shall die."

"By the same arrow?"

"By the same arrow."

Rainaldo, who had returned to the chamber, paled a little at these words. "Is it necessary?" he inquired, running his hand through his hair.

"Altogether so," replied the Marchesa, signing her son to recline beside Isotta.

The Marchesa went to a secret panel in the wall, and took from a shelf a large parchment volume.

"She knows even my secret shelves," sighed her son.

After referring to the index, the dame opened the volume to a certain page. She adjusted her spectacles. The directions for son-slaying were evidently not clear. The Marchesa went through them in pantomime. First, you took the silver arrow from the side of the damsel; then you tripled the circle thrice about the son; then you plunged the arrow through his heart.

"You should have slain yourself," grumbled the Marchesa to Rainaldo.

But Rainaldo was pale and rigid, a shape sepulchral as the maiden. His mother hastened the ritual; and in a moment Rainaldo likewise was slain, and shared the beautiful and eloquent silence of Isotta.

"He wore a mask, died, and passed to the mysterious regions of the inner world," murmured the Marchesa.

She restored the book to its place; and returning to the couch, tied a mask of pale rose over the face of Isotta. This accomplished, she removed her spectacles, and sank into a seat.

"Isotta fell in love with a masked figure," she said to herself. "That is, she fell in love with abstract youth. It is a quaint idea. Rainaldo must fall in love with Isotta masked, with abstract youth likewise. Such is the first mystery."

"It is strange how cold these August nights are."

"When they are tired of being slain, they will rise and move about and unmask, and begin to love each other

as Rainaldo and Isotta, instead of as two emanations of youth. Such is the second mystery.

"These August nights are very cool.

"When they are tired of loving each other as Rainaldo and Isotta, they will discover that the face itself is but a mask, and find reality in each other's eyes. How very philosophical everything is! But I must go back to bed."

The sound of the Marchesa's foot-

steps died away down the corridor.

Rainaldo turned to Isotta, and said, "The first and third mysteries are eternal, being Nature and God; the second is mortal, being man, and lives only in the present."

"Where is the present?" inquired Isotta, removing her lover's mask.

"It is yonder in the moonlight," said Rainaldo, leaping up and pointing towards the open door.

## A Ballad of Worldly Wise

By JOHN McCLURE

"Where now are those brave kings of old  
That walked in purple and spun gold?  
Ay, where now, tell me then, is that  
King of the Jews, Jehosephat?"

"Whist, lad! He is as far from home  
As Julius Caesar, the King o'Rome,  
Perhaps in the same coign of hell  
With that mad Frenchman, Charles Martel.  
They have the selfsame pathway trod  
With Pontius Pilate, that killed God."

"And Tamburlaine, and Greek Scamander,  
Artaxerxes, Alexander?"

"They have vanished, bone and limb,  
Every glory, every whim,  
All confounded, one by one,  
Into kind oblivion.  
Every glory, every whim,  
Every crown and diadem,  
Every king that flaunteth them,  
Death he taketh unto him."



# Frank Harris

By H. C. AUER, Jr.

**D**URING my first year in college, one of my instructors read "An English Saint" to the class, from a volume of stories called "Unpath'd Waters." The story appealed to me so intensely, that I read "Montes the Matador," and "Elder Conklin," and later, "The Veils of Isis." But I had not exhausted Frank Harris, there were two books on Shakespeare and a play, and other stories; three novels, and a biography. I wanted to learn something about this man who wrote plays, and novels and stories, touching them all with high and low shadows. There was a paragraph in "Who's Who in America" and a slightly longer comment in the English edition, but there was no biography, no sketch of the writer who had done so much for our national letters.

Several years later, I came upon two books in the New York public library, a little brochure by Temple Scott, filled with the kind of praise one finds in publishers' announcements and a bound volume of the *Forum*, with a long review of Frank Harris' first series of "Contemporary Portraits" and a portrait of the author, dexterously drawn by the editor, Michael Monahan. In a more recent book, "Set Down in Malice," Gerald Cumberland chats, delightfully, about Harris in one of a number of uniformly excellent chapters on living writers. But it remains for some neophyte, perhaps, to do the great biography, and it will be done, we may be

sure of that—unless Frank carries out the threat to write his own story. What an autobiography it would be! written—assuredly, in Paris, and with the background of a thousand memories!

During the war, little was heard of Harris, except through the pages of his magazine. Malice and prejudice wear themselves out, eventually, and Frank Harris is gradually coming into his own.

I received a letter from H. L. Mencken, a few days ago, concluding with the following paragraph: "For Harris, I have a high respect. His Wilde is a superb piece of work. All the opposition to him is grounded on the fact that he saw the dishonesty of the statement of England's war aims from the start and openly denounced it. No sane man believes in it now. But the super-patriots and Anglomaniacs hate him for having exposed their folly." Bruno's "Review" published an interesting story about Harris, which was reprinted, with an introductory comment, in the Sunday magazine section of the *Detroit Free Press*, under the caption: "Frank Harris, Unappreciated."

A recent number of the Saturday book page, of the *Detroit Daily Times*, contained a sketch of a memorable evening, which I enjoyed with Mr. Harris in his home. I shall never forget his impersonation of Burleson, then power

of powers in Washington. When the bent shoulders straightened and the squeaky voice resumed its mellow quality, the spirit of "the King's minister" had gone, and Mrs. Harris turned to me and said: "Wouldn't Frank have made a splendid actor?" Mrs. Harris had been a talented actress and knew her art.

Reviews of "A Mad Love," his latest work, have appeared in Detroit papers, in the *Stepladder Magazine* (Bookfellows) and in a recent issue of Llewellyn Jones' Friday Literary Page in the Chicago *Evening Post*. A review in the Detroit *Times* brought the following letter to my desk: "My dear Auer: Your review is excellent and kindly, but the chief point is missed in it. I tried to say new things about music. Did I do it? Bernard Shaw says the music part of the story is splendid, but the love part mere romantic piffle."

A supplementary notice of the book was printed in the next issue of "Reading and Writing," with an "impertinent" letter from Lee Smits, urging the Editor of *Pearson's* to give up the magazine for creative writing. I think that such a passage as this is worth reprinting: "I have just finished 'Montes' again and have been carried back to the days when I first read 'The Bomb', which left an impression deeper than that produced by any novel since . . . I do not say that 'The Bomb' is greater than anything Conrad ever wrote. . . I only know that it LIVES more vividly in my memory than any other work of fiction. . . I suspect that you are a missionary, filled with the noble illusion that your voice crying in the wilderness can help to improve conditions of life

in this 'rat-pit' world."—Lee J. Smits.

Intimate glimpses may be had of men through their letters, and among those, from Harris, recently, is one which is particularly chatty and interesting.

40 7th Avenue,  
April 7, 1921.

"My dear Auer:

"Your letter came as wine to me, and I get very little wine whether for the spirit or the body in these sad days.

"You tell me four of my stories are masterpieces, but you leave out 'Magic Glasses' that Arnold Bennett and Wells thought my best, and 'Mr. Jacob's Philosophy,' that I have a great liking for. However, that matters little. . . No, I have not read 'Joan and Peter.' Since the war fever attacked him, Wells has done nothing good it seems to me. Of course, I know Edgar Jepson. I used to like him very much; used him once as assistant on 'Vanity Fair' when I went to America. I put him in my place and had a strange experience, which I will tell you about, sometime. He has brain ability but no heart.

"I have not read 'Main Street,' but I know Sinclair Lewis, and know that he will never do anything big. You have mentioned 'McTeague.' Frank Norris' 'Octopus' is the only epic, America has produced and his 'Pit' is also good. Of course, I am sending you 'A Mad Love' and 'Elder Conklin' also.

"By the way, I wish you would nail this Heywood Broun to the cross (I enclose clippings). The London *Times* gave three columns to the 'Contemporary Portraits' in the one issue, although it is published in America and there were no advertising strings attached,

and the *Times* also had a screed about it as one of the Books of the Week. Heywood Broun writes like a tenth-rate university professor and treats me as if I were negligible.

"Thanks for showing me what Chesterton said! I am not sure that he is a great man, but he is very interesting.

"Most sincerely,

"FRANK HARRIS."

## The Railroad Station

By JEANNETTE MARKS

A station is a place of miracle:  
 So many trains passing and repassing,  
 So many thoughts coming and going,  
 So many greetings and farewells!  
 Any surprise might happen there:  
 God come and go,  
 Street cries turn to stars,  
 Dust of blown rubbish whirl to aureole!  
 Thus, in such a place,  
 Love met me once.  
 That day the shining tracks seemed leaping toward eternity,  
 And we heard the street cries sing like stars,  
 And we saw God come and go  
 And the dust upon our hair was gold!

Now, blinded, I look past all I see:  
 It might happen,  
 Love might be there again!  
 It's not that I think a railroad station heaven.  
 Who does!  
 Yet so many greetings and farewells,—  
 Anything might happen!  
 Have you not felt that way,  
 And, bewildered, watched;  
 And, longing, waited?

# Little Tales of Mexico

No. 1. *How Felipe Looked Out of a Window*

By VINCENT STARRETT

THROUGHOUT the turmoil incident to the late unpleasantness in Mexico, which replaced the idealistic carnage of the dreamer Madero with the less altruistic, but no less carmine, slaughter of the soldier Huerta, business in the City fell off enormously. Every encouragement was given the populace to continue in the habit of daily purchase, and many of the smaller shops conducted a brisk, although guarded activity behind the dubious shelter of shuttered windows.

While the occasion was one of death, the undertakers did not benefit by the change. In the circumstances, a solicitation of patronage might have savored of impertinence. So the unhappy dead were allowed to remain quiescent where they fell, until it occurred to the government of the moment to remove them in tumbrils, and place them together in a remote spot out of the way of marching troops, whose movements must not be obstructed.

Thus, although the Indian mortality rate was high, little profit accrued to the undertakers. When an occasional American or Briton had the misfortune to wander into the line of fire in the streets, an enterprising firm of American or British embalmers was sure to be awarded the burial contract, and the native artist was left to whistle moodily in his studio, with a whole streetful of prospective business outside his door. It was a discouraging episode, the whole ten days of destruction, and the native

undertakers shook their honest heads and longed for a return of that unaccustomed but delightful peace, when Indians drank themselves to death on *mescal* or *pulque*, and were decently buried.

In the neat shop of Gabriel Urueta, in the *Calle Zamora*, this skilful workman was listening to bad news. Slinking into his place of business that morning, he had become involved with a band of government soldiers, who, with characteristic zeal and execrable marksmanship, had shot away one of Gabriel's fingers before they could be convinced that the undertaker was of the right side. In this pass, with only one assistant, Gabriel Urueta had reached his office to learn that his assistant was about to leave him without help at all. In the unlikely event of a "case", he would be in the devil's own fix, what with his bandaged hand and only his wife to aid him.

"Señor Moran is rushed, and is willing to pay well for expert assistance," said Felipe Rodriguez, as he tendered his resignation.

"Señor Moran may go to the Barba-does!" retorted Gabriel Urueta. "He has stolen all the business in the City, and now he steals my best assistant."

This last was a diplomatic stroke, for Felipe was Gabriel Urueta's *only* assistant.

"Can I help it?" demanded the assistant, with an air of martyrdom. He will pay fifteen pesos a day!"



It was a munificent wage. The undertaker knew it.

"I shall not pay you for two days this week," he declared, at length. "You should have told me you were leaving."

"I did not know."

"It is no matter. I shall not pay you."

Felipé's face twitched with sudden passion. His countenance was suddenly that of a cat. Had he possessed a tail, it would have switched viciously from side to side. His moustache bristled.

"If you will come back when Señor Moran is not so busy," relented Gabriel Urueta, "I shall pay you, and you shall be my asistant again."

Good assistants were scarce.

"I shall never enter your place again!" savagely observed Felipé.

He strode angrily to the door, but paused with an apprehensive jump, as a renewal of firing sounded in the next square.

"Who will dress my windows?" wailed the undertaker, in despair.

Felipé was also his best window-dresser. No other so cunningly could arrange the tawdry satin folds in the cheap white caskets that adorned the windows of Gabriel Urueta.

"I do not care!" recklessly said the departing window dresser.

"You shall dress them!" screamed Gabriel Urueta. "You shall come back, in a day or two, Felipé, and I shall pay you six pesos a day. I cannot lose my best window dresser."

"I shall never dress your windows again," declared Felipé, opening the door.

"You shall be my asistant, and you shall dress my windows," shrieked the undertaker at the retreating back of the asistant, "or the day will come soon

when I shall bury you in your own window display!"

With this elaborate promise, Gabriel Urueta returned to the rear of his darkened shop, and resumed his morose meditation. He was deeply put out by Felipé's desertion, for Felipé was also an excellent mourner in the homes of those unfortunates who brought their dead to his shop.

The versatile Felipé took over his new duties with his usual cheerful ardor. He whistled joyfully at his tasks, and, as long as he was inside four walls, was in no wise disturbed by the rattle of machine guns in the neighboring streets.. Long association with the dead, Felipé felt, had made him view death in its proper perspective. The prospect of being himself rendered dead, in a quarrel which, as a peace-loving man, he was beginning to dislike, was not sufficiently alluring, however, to make him incautious in his journeys to and from the shop of Señor Moran.

For the most part, the fighting now was in the other end of town, but stray parties of assassins still patrolled the nearby streets with careless rifles; murder was still a pastime of the many. Felipé had been known to crawl across a street on his stomach, when occasion had seemed to demand it, literally interpreting an ancient aphorism concerning the travel of armies.

It occurred to Felipé, during the *siesta* hour, some days after his departure from the shop of Gabriel Urueta, to look in upon that forlorn tradesman. Not to cross his threshold, for he had sworn never again to do that; but to glance through the windows, per-

haps, if the shutters happened to be unbarred, and to place his thumb obscenely to his nose. This would be sure to infuriate Gabriel Urueta, and would be a source of happiness to Felipé Rodríguez.

He noted, as he moved through the streets, that Gabriel's shop again had become a suburb of the battle zone. Fantastic groups of lifeless Indians decorated important street intersections, and at one point he observed that a horse had charged half through a shop window before yielding up its spirit. The animal's hind legs, hoofs rigidly lifted, grotesquely protruded from the jagged aperture. In a doorway, two soldiers lay with their heads together, in the fashion of men whispering boisterous stories. They might have been engaged in some such earnest discourse, had they not been dead. Felipé passed then with a theatrical shrug, although a prickling sensation in his spine was not entirely an item in his daily emotions.

As he entered the *Calle Zamora*, a spattering rifle fire broke out behind him. Unwilling to figure in any fatalities that might follow the outburst, Felipé ran quickly forward and collapsed, breathing hard, behind a post before the door of Gabriel Urueta. Looking up, he saw his erstwhile employer in the doorway. The undertaker's eyes were upon him.

"Come in, quick!" called Gabriel Urueta.

Felipé grinned insultingly.

"I shall never enter your place again, nor dress your windows!" he said, and

placed his thumb to his nose.

A spasm of rage crossed the face of Gabriel Urueta. He began a colorful response, then turned and fled swiftly within. The undertaker's door crashed shut in the face of a rabble of soldiers who ran in from the street. A brief medley of pistol shots sounded against the panels. Then a picturesque ruffian, with a stolen automatic, laughingly leaned over the prostrate Felipé, and shot him through the face.

Fortunately, Felipé was already dead. He had died of fright a moment before.

When a respite of darkness had fallen over the city, Gabriel Urueta, not without tears, emerged from his retreat and dragged the body of his former pupil and window dresser across the threshold; and in the morning the face of Felipé Rodríguez, astonishingly life-like, looked stonily at chance passersby out of the window of the undertaker's shop, from the tawdry satin folds in the cheap white casket that had been his dearest care.

As the coffin was set up on end, and braced against the back partition, Felipé had an excellent view of all that went forward, and for several days he served to advertise the skill of Gabriel Urueta in a thankless profession.

So that, while Felipé broke a promise, Gabriel Urueta kept several; for Felipé had come back and had crossed his threshold; and now he dressed the undertaker's window, from which shortly he was to be buried in his own window display.

# To Arms! Burgundians!

By BENJAMIN DE CASSERES

**T**HAT blessed word Mesopotamia may never have a successor. The old lady who went to church only to hear the young parson roll it off must have got some mystical connotations out of those syllables. It was, maybe, like the long roll of a drum in her soul; and a drum can awaken the deepest recesses of the soul without evoking a single image. Napoleon had drummers everywhere in his armies, and he kept them hammering away night and day, because, he said, the drum drove out thought.

It may be the same with "Mesopotamia"; theologians keep repeating it because it thrills and stifles thought.

Now, after reading Romain Rolland's great book, "Colas Breugnon, Burgundian," I find myself haunted by that word of the sub-title, "Burgundian!" I will confess that I bought it because of the word "Burgundian", with the great basso-profundo note.

Burgundian! Burgundian! I repeated walking the streets.

Burgundian! Burgundian! I said like a prayer before I put on my nightie.

Burgundian! Burgundian! resounded like a giant, half-muffled alarm clock in my brain when I opened my eyes in the morning.

I am a Burgundian; thou art a Burgundian; he is a Burgundian, I kept conjugating on my way to the book store.

And when I faced the salesman and boomed into his face that my need was

"Colas Breugnon, BURGUNDIAN," I felt that I was in the same beatified condition as the old lady who, when she died, was taken by St. Peter to the edge of the universe and shown in all its glory the blessed word Mesopotamia become a glorious spiritual panorama.

Was it because Burgundy has always been my best beloved wine or because I am a born logocrat, loving beautifully sounding words more than money or immortality, or because my philosophical and poetic oracles told me that in that word I should find the final and best philosophy of life?

My reactions to the word are masculine, epicurean, pagan. "Burgundian" conjured out of my inflammable imagination Falstaff and Anacreon, Omar Khayyam and Aristophanes, Erasmus and Anatole France, Goethe and Rabelais, the "Beautiful Blue Danube" and Chesterton, Tartarin of Tarascon and Petronius, the Abbé Coignard and the "Second Hungarian Rhapsody," "Tyl Eulenspiegel" and Michel de Montaigne, James Branch Cabell and the Boul' Mich'—all locked up in a luscious cluster of cerebral grapes suddenly squashed on my parched gullet, wherefrom ran rich red wine beyond the reach of federal inspectors.

The tremendous import of the word Burgundian, which has slipped so suddenly on the woolsock of my interior parliament of images, maybe a reaction from the unbουργundian environment in which we find ourselves to-

day on this side of the Statue of Liberty.

The suppressed thirst in this alcoholic Cimmeria in which we are living may have woven on my curtain of darkness the mirage of Burgundian cities, Burgundian faces, Burgundian smiles, Burgundian feasts and Burgundian scepticism, or may have been evoked by the impish Prosperos at the base of my joyously transgressing nature.

In "Colas Breugnon, Burgundian," Romain Rolland has created one of the greatest characters of all time framed in one of the most beautiful and stimulating books ever written. He is the laughing Job. It is a book for brave men and sick people, and comes in the nick of time, when the face of the world is long and its asses' ears longer.

Colas, the old winesack of a Burgundian, triumphs over all the ills of life by submitting to them. When Medusa peeps over the fence of his garden he takes another bumper and hurls a cabbage at her ridiculous head. When the soldiers invade his house he sits in the wine cellar with them. Plague and death and riot have no power over his Aristophanic grin, for Colas Breugnon, Burgundian, is an aristocrat; that is, a being who lives himself both wisely and well, loves himself to the point where his love overflows and inundates all the world. He guzzles his days, his books, his emotional and mental experiences like a mighty Pan.

Life is good because it is an adventure. He is superman of the stomach, and his scepticism about all things is the flower of a profoundly religious nature. He is a pantheist, although he never uses the word. He might paraphrase Descartes by saying, I live; therefore, God is good.

He flows with life. He is too wise to say Nay to disaster. Satan has no power over that giant guffaw and that great wine-soaked nose, and that mouth that says simultaneously "Hurrah!" and "Bosh!" to everything.

\* \* \*

After reading this great book—a veritable bible of earthly wisdom spilled out of the heart of that mighty France—I feel like dividing the human race into Burgundians and Cimmerians.

The Burgundian spirit is the spirit of an eternal renaissance, of easy-going, the spirit of Henley's "Invictus." To be a Burgundian is to be confederate to the Great Jest, to pal in with Fatality, to utter with Goethe each day, "The secret of life is life itself." It is good because I'm here.

The Cimmerians we know. No need to psycho-analyze them. They are the salt of the earth and much dry wisdom is with 'em. Their ways they are dark and their tricks are not vain, the same which I'm not going to rise to explain.

Evoo! Colas Breugnon, Burgundian! The youth of the world salute you!

There is no place so high that an ass laden with gold cannot reach it.—  
*Rojas.*



## The Verdict

By CARMELITE JANVIER

I watch my balloon  
For it is a thing of beauty  
Floating in the air;  
Now scintillating and gorgeous in the sun light,  
Now dipping and swaying into the shadow,  
Always free and colorful and buoyant—  
Wonderously buoyant!  
You speak...  
And a fragment of soiled and crumpled rubber  
Lies in the dust.

## Dunsany—After the Tales

By NOEL STRAUS

At word of thine, the portals of Romance  
Swing lightly back, disclosing to our gaze  
Enchanted realms of beauty past all praise.  
There ancient gods and warriors wield the lance;  
And maidens swiftly wake to love, and dance  
In red-gold courts of palaces, ablaze  
With amethyst and pearl and chrysoprase.  
New marvels we behold at every glance.  
Thou lead'st beyond the ultimate star that burns,  
To gleaming cities hung in dazzling light;  
Or unto woods in distant, dim domains,  
The lairs of slinking beasts aprowl at night,  
Where foaming rivers, swollen with ceaseless rains,  
Leap into tragic seas whence none returns.

## Starrett's Chicago Letter

CHICAGO'S "local color" popularly is believed to be just a shade less gray than that of Pittsburgh; its "atmosphere" a blanket of Stygian odor, by-product of the packing industry! its thoroughfares sacred to commercialism and crime. The city's reputation is not entirely founded upon legend, nor is it undeserved; yet in intervals of loathing the place, one finds much to recommend it. It is not un-beautiful, and in its swarming streets there is much to interest and entertain. The variety of its life is extraordinary. Not even London, I believe, can offer so many studies in contemporaneous contrast. That 99 per cent of its citizens have never really seen Chicago, of course, goes without saying.

The outstanding sights of the city are recorded in guide books; the quieter and vastly more satisfying views are of accidental meeting. With the coming of spring and summer, I have resumed my "little journeys," and on the old North Side have revisited a number of delightful glimpses.

From the window of a Northwestern elevated train, rushing past Orleans street, I sense a fascinating "old world" atmosphere about St. Joseph's Priory; just a glimpse of a still and peaceful courtyard enclosed behind high towered walls that cast deep shadows on the grass. A fountain plays over bright fish (goldfish, no doubt) in a sunken pool, edged with flowers; and at the sunset hour black-froked priests pace with meditative steps the encircling

walk. For a moment something stirs in the silence of the soul, and the world rolls back a thousand years; then we are past, and the unending panorama of housetops and porches begins again. Around me, busy office folk are deeply engrossed with their newspapers. They have not noticed. Perhaps they are wishing for time or money to journey in far countries.

Not far away, quaint little cottages with white porcelain door knobs make it almost ends in the broad back elevation of Christ Church, then queerly changes its mind and curves into a narrow by-way around to aristocratic La Salle.

The great gray mass of the Newberry Library bulks beyond the trees of Walton Square. Among its treasures are Latin breviaries, and Sanskrit volumes with copper leaves, and an illuminated manuscript roll of the Bhagavad Gita. And as one rests in the square, through the trees threads a silver chiming of bells from some neighboring temple, lost at length in the whirl of electrica, the purr of limousines, and the chugging of Fords in the avenue beyond . . . After all, it is the twentieth centry.

\* \* \*

Apropos of this sort of adventure: it was Balzac, was it not, who collected his realism by following people in the street and listening to their remarks? The only trouble with this ingenious system of eavesdropping is that the results are likely to be fragmentary and unsatisfying. One catches an intriguing sen-

tence and presses closer . . . but the crowd heaves and ripples, the interval widens and the sequel is gone forever.

The most extraordinary fragment that ever drifted to me out of Babel came to my ears in the crowded aisle of a State street department store. A protesting citizen, haggard and three-parts mad, was being propelled through the throng by his wife (the relationship was painfully evident) toward the lunch room. As he lurched past with the rabble, over his shoulder he flung back a desperate cry: "*I ain't goin' to eat one of them things!*"

Ships that pass in the night! Time and again, I have tried to guess the object of his aversion, but in all the world of edibles there is nothing that seems quite to merit the combined fury and despair of his utterance.

\* \* \*

Anthony M. Rud is a writer of short stories for the popular magazine. He is also a neighbor of mine, and the son of my doctor. I had never met the son, but believing it the duty of a veteran of letters to encourage beginners with friendly criticism and applause, I set out to call upon this young man. A maid met me at the front door, and informed me that Mr. Rud was spending the winter in Florida with his family, and had not yet returned! That is the end of the story, except that I am still wondering how this sort of thing is done, for it costs money to spend the winter in Florida, and I, too, am a writer.

\* \* \*

Burton Rascoe has gone east, and is now managing editor of *McCall's Magazine*. I believe him to be the best literary critic in America. What he will do

with a woman's journal is an engaging mystery. By all signs, *McCall's* should begin to be important from now on.

\* \* \*

Among recent additions to the Bookfellow's membership rolls are President Harding, Mrs. Jack London, Carl Sandburg, Theodore Maynard, William Griffith, Bruce Barton, Lew Sarett and Herbert Quick. This notable group adds stature to the Order, and suggests that shortly the Bookfellow's will be an organization with which publishers will do well to reckon. The membership is approaching the 1300 mark, as I write, and 1300 persons who know what they want in literature can pretty nearly get it. Heretofore, the Order has published its volumes in limited editions. Before long, it will seek a wider clientele, and there will be some lively competition.

\* \* \*

Charles H. Dennis, managing editor of the *Daily News*, has been contributing occasional entertaining articles on Eugene Field to the columns of his paper; memories of the Field he intimately knew. Frequently the *News* gathers up its special articles and offers the public a valuable booklet. It is to be hoped it will do so with these Field papers.

\* \* \*

George Meek, the author-bath-chairman, is dead at Eastbourne, after a life of illness, disappointment and general unhappiness. Toward the end he was shockingly poor, and had been all but cut to pieces by surgeons. He lived on about \$3.25 a week, as I figure English money, and there was a family! A few months ago, a little group in Chicago,

hearing of his difficulties, was able to ease the situation a trifle, but nothing could save Meek. His book, now almost forgotten, was an important addition to that literary shelf labeled "human documents." H. G. Wells wrote the introduction; but I believe Meek never made much by it . . . . What is it that the Meek are to inherit?

\* \* \*

With the death of "B. L. T.," the famous "Line-O'-Type" column of the *Tribune* tottered and seemed about to fall; but a new conductor has been procured, who with innumerable "contribs," manages to produce a daily column. Meanwhile, the enterprising *Post* has swung into the game, and started a column of its own, thinking to profit by the defection of *Tribune* contributors. To some extent, it has done so; but both columns flourish less brilliantly than did Taylor's. Perhaps the best column in the country, just now, is Keith Preston's "Periscope" every Wednesday on the *Daily News* book page.

\* \* \*

My private bureau of information in London reports that "Joan Sutherland" (Mrs. Richard Kelly), the English author, shortly is to visit America on a copy-seeking tour. . . . Meanwhile, a number of our Chicago writers are seeking other lands in search of the elusive "word." Mary Hastings Bradley, who writes popular, sentimental thrillers, is said to be off for Africa, while others are booked for Europe.

\* \* \*

The antiquarian book shops continue to cry for copies of "Jurgen" and "Painted Veils," and some astonishing prices are being offered and asked for

these *opi*. The former work is still a topic of conversation, and promises to become as standard a subject as crops and the weather. Many persons, having read "Jurgen," sing its praises with tireless and tiresome monotony, their panegyrics offering complete evidence of their failure to understand so much as half of what they have read; others, reading with partial understanding, speak of it with a knowing air and an occasional furtive wink, and manifestly regard it as the greatest masterpiece of a kind since "Fanny Hill." Some thousands of excellent persons, who have read not a line of it, blush at mention of the pawnbroker's name. A comparative few have read the book with entire understanding and complete appreciation, and these render their opinion only when it is asked. But booksellers will pay \$20 for a first edition, and will ask \$35 for it.

\* \* \*

*Cartoons Magazine*, a distinctly Chicago journal with a national reputation, will begin a change of policy with the next (July) issue, when it will appear as "Cartoons and Wayside Tales." It offers a market for first-class fiction, and, in time, will become exclusively a literary journal, as "Wayside Tales." For a few months, however, it will retain a number of the old "Cartoons" features. Thomas C. O'Donnell is Editor, and H. H. Windsor is publisher. The editorial offices are in the Tower Building.

\* \* \*

In "Jake" Eunice Tietjens appears to have written a fine novel of the new, abbreviated school. In 200 pages, she has accomplished a finely moving and



human work, and the best critics, including myself, are saying complimentary things about it. Boni & Liveright published the book, which is attractively issued. Eunice Tietjens already has wide celebrity as a poet. She does not publish often; rather, she works care-

fully, and publishes when she has something to say. She is the wife of Cloyd Head, the poet-dramatist.

\* \* \*

For the rest, your correspondent has Spring fever.

VINCENT STARRETT.

## The Wind

By OSCAR WILLIAMS

I have known the wind  
In a strange, dim place  
Like a cool pillow  
Against my face.

I have felt the wind  
When the day was fair,  
As I ran my fingers  
Through his elfin hair.

I have heard the wind  
Sounding the deep sea,  
Waking blowing twilights  
Like hidden harmony.

I have seen the wind  
Lift gold waves of a stream,  
Revealing the weirdness,  
The dark, endless dream.

I shall know the wind  
In a strange, dim place  
Like a cool pillow  
Against my face . . .

# Reviews

SHERWOOD ANDERSON

WE have come a long way from the pattern-making preoccupations of an Henry James when we can welcome a statement from an artist with as bold a contrasting simplicity as the answer that Sherwood Anderson once gave me to an analysis I had attempted of one of his short stories. "I am in truth mighty little interested in any discussions of art or life, or what a man's place in the scheme of things may be. It has to be done, I suppose, but after all there is the *fact* of life. Its story wants telling and singing. That's what I want,—the tale and the song of it." And it is that Anderson has so pre-eminently captured the "tale and the song of it" that I find his words so acceptable—at least in so far as they relate to his own work.

I spoke of an "attempted" analysis because of being since satisfied that beyond the possibility of a certain uneven surface penetration, Anderson's stories possess a too defiant and timeless solidity,—too much a share of life and clay itself,—to be tagged and listed with mechanical precisions. And what a satisfaction this is, to read stories over and again without a bundle of dry bones and cogwheels of "situations" and "plots" spilling out into one's lap. It must have been because of a surfeit of such disappointments that "Winesburg, Ohio," when it first appeared, kept me up a whole night in a steady crescendo of emotions. Here was "stark realism," but a realism simplified and strangely sophisticated by the inscrutable soil. And by "soil" I mean something much

more than a kind of local colour. There is plenty of that quite wonderfully applied, both in "Winesburg" and in "Poor White," but there is also something more important and rare than this,—a contact with animal and earthy life so indefinably yet powerfully used as a very foundation to the stories that it might be compared to the sap that pervades the tree-trunk, branches, and twigs. Let me quote an instance of what I mean from "Poor White."

Clara Butterworth, merging into womanhood, is musing in the shadows of her father's barns. . . .

"Clara jumped quickly out of the hammock and walked about under the trees in the orchard. Her thoughts of Jim Priest's youth startled her. It was as though she had walked suddenly into a room where a man and woman were making love. Her cheeks burned and her hands trembled. As she walked slowly through the clumps of grass and weeds that grew between the trees where the sunlight struggled through, bees coming home to the hives heavily laden with honey flew in droves about her head. There was something heady and purposeful about the song of labor that arose out of the beehives. It got into her blood and her step quickened. The words of Jim Priest that kept running through her head seemed a part of the same song, the bees were singing. 'The sap has begun to run up the tree,' she repeated aloud. How significant and strange the words seemed! They were the kind of words a lover might use in speaking to his be-

loved. She had read many novels, but they contained no such words. It was better so. It was better to hear them from human lips."

This is but one of many remembered paragraphs and pages from which arises a lyricism, deliberate and light, as a curl of milk-weed seeds drawn toward the sun. It is his love for rows of corn on flat lands, fields bending over rolling Ohio hills, and the smell of barns under the warm hours of noon, that has given Anderson's descriptions of modern city life with its mechanical distortions of humanity, such thrust and bite.

In "Poor White" there is the "machine" of modern existence,—the monster that is upon us all. No one who treats however slightly of the lives of the poor or middle classes can escape the issues of its present hold on us. It has seduced the strongest from the land to the cities, and in most cases made empty and meaningless their lives. It has cheapened the worth of all human commodities and even the value of human lives. It has destroyed the pride and pleasure of the craftsman in his work. "Hugh McVey," the son of a tramp of sordid Missouri River life, becomes a "dreamer of the machines" who invents one after another typical practical improvement such as harvesters, potato-planters, etc., which enrich the speculating manufacturers who grasp at them, bow down before them, and wrangle about them. McVey goes on inventing and himself making money, but finds himself in time becoming more and more indifferent and disappointed. Most of all he is bewildered by the ever greater rush of the new

industrialism with its "becoming" towns, its smoke and squalor. He has found no satisfactory foothold. His own machines have robbed him of something and left nothing in its place. He cannot be satisfied with himself as a machine producing machines. Unconsciously he is being urged by more natural impulses that he has perhaps denied too long. Like so many others he is lost among cogs and complicated springs. One sees all through this book how character is bent, blunted, regulated, diverted, or lacerated by the "machine." There is the perfect episode of a harness-maker whose love for manual perfection of craft finally drives him to the murder of an unstart apprentice who had insisted in overruling him by adopting machine made saddles as substitutes for the carefully wrought saddles of the old man.

Looking back at two earlier books, "Windy McPherson's Son" and "Marching Men," one can see a great advance in "Poor White." There has always been the propagandist threatening the artist in Anderson; and in these first two books the propagandist comes out too dangerously near a victory to satisfy us despite the much brilliant description these books contain. Since then he has freed himself from much of this. Not that he has chosen to ignore any fact or problems, but rather that he has succeeded in treating them more impersonally, incorporating them, less obviously, in character and action. To appreciate this advance from the seductive stagnations of sentimentality to a clear acceptance and description of our life to-day for what it be worth, is to realize how few other Americans have had the



courage, let alone the vision, to do anything like it. Norris and Dreiser, and one or two others of native birth have been the only ones. In Anderson there has been some great sincerity, perhaps the element of the "soil" itself personified in him, that has made him refuse to turn aside to offer the crowds those profitable "lollypops" that have "made" and ruined so many other of our writers.

Of course it is patent that people do not like to be told the truth. Especially our Puritans! "Winesburg" was the first book to tell the truth about our small mid-western towns. And what a fury it threw some people into! It seemed to be so much easier for those people to fling back,—"Neuroticism!" "Obscenity!" and "Exaggeration!" than to recognize themselves and others there. I could understand it perfectly myself, having lived for a while in a small town of similar location and colour. But my real point for admiring it was not because it merely told the truth; it was that "Winesburg" represented a work of distinct aesthetic achievement, an example of synthetic form,—not merely a medley of a thousand exterior details such as Lewis's "Main Street." It takes more than the recognition of facts as facts to move us in fiction. There must be some beauty wrung from them to hold us long. We can recognize this quality without having it pointed out to us if our hearts are not too deadened, our sensibilities too dulled. In "Winesburg," the windows, alleys and lanes of the place are opened to us to find what we may. There is an exalting pathos in the episode called "Mother." The ironic humor and richness of "An Awakening" has the

vivid and unbroken vitality of a silhouette. "Paper Pills," to me the finest thing in the book, has an idyllic beauty that sets it beside the old legend of "Daphnis and Chloe," and there are other chapters and episodes unmatched anywhere.

During the last two years there have been some short stories published in various magazines, such as "I Want to Know Why," "The Triumph of the Egg," "The New Englander," and "The Other Woman," that I look forward to seeing collected into a volume. I would like to see Anderson handle the negro in fiction. So far it has not been done by anyone without sentimentality or cruelty, but the directness of his vision would produce something new and deep in this direction. In the winter and spring of '20 Anderson was in southern Alabama near the sea finishing "Poor White," and his interest in the black man became so aroused that he wrote me,—*"The negroes are the living wonder of this place. What a tale if someone could penetrate into the home and the life of the Southern negro and not taint it in the ordinary superficial way."*

The time has already arrived when Anderson is beginning to be recognized as among the few first recorders of the life of a people coming to some state of self-consciousness. He is without sentimentality; and he makes no pretense of offering solutions. He has a humanity and simplicity that is quite baffling in depth and suggestiveness, and his steady and deliberate growth is proving right along the promise it gives of finer work. A verse from his "A New Testament" has an oddly personal tone to it:



"My mind is the mind of a little man with thin legs who sells cigars in a store. My mind is the mind of a cripple who died in an alleyway at Cleveland, Ohio. My mind is the mind of a child who fell into a well, the mind of one who cleans the streets of a city, of an actor who walks up and down on a stage."

HART CRANE.

## JAKE

By EUNICE TIETJENS

(Boni and Liveright, 1921)

MISS Tietjens' book is impressive. Not once does she noisily assert an undeniable commonplace. At no time is she becalmed upon a sea of odious detail. She pays her readers an unusual compliment—she assumes in them an average degree of intelligence and imagination. One feels that her characters undoubtedly brush their teeth, yet one is spared a pseudo-scientific discussion upon the merits of rival tooth-pastes.

"Jake" is neither a card-catalogue of physical sensations, nor an over-generous helping of spiritual blancmange.

It is that rare and happy thing, a well-balanced book. There is a keen and vigorous analysis of character, a serenity of style, a certain courageous simplicity, which is reminiscent of the Russians. Of the Russians of the pre-brainstorm period.

One's quarrel with so many books—the small-town fiction in particular—is that they do almost nothing to stir the imagination. At the most they leave one drearily well-informed concerning the bodily and mental habits of a few

amazingly uninteresting people. With strange perserverance and with meticulous care, certain authors have fostered the belief that the Middle West is vapid, sad and tedious. Lovingly they have dwelt upon its dullness.

And now comes Miss Tietjens like a ray of light to illumine this dolorous region. She demolishes their theory that the Middle West is necessarily depressing. She makes the surprisingly pleasant discovery that it is not the source of all boredom.

Its small towns still possess a trace of romance and their inhabitants are not all people from whom one must flee. At their approach one does not feel an irresistible desire to join that charming society of Sir James Barrie's—the Society for Doing Without Some People.

Miss Tietjens can deal with tragedy without suffering from an atrophied sense of humor. And it is one of life's little ironies that so often the tragic is so ridiculous. "Tragedies of the body have a certain stark validity of their own. Death or serious physical injury stops temporarily the wheels of living; room is made for suffering, a proper stage-setting is provided. High drama stalks in proper habiliments. But tragedy of the spirit is always sandwiched in between the mechanics of living, between the soup and the meat at dinner, between office hours and the putting of the children to bed. Living cannot be halted merely because a soul is in agony, and the slaying of hearts is done anywhere, anyhow, in the left-over scraps of time and strength."

Jake is more than credible—he is an actuality. Surely everyone has known

him. The lovable failure who "never steered his course in the main, but went where the winds blew him, yet he went with such a good grace."

He is of those for whom tragedy is inevitable. One of the sensitive, self-distrustful type, with sad eyes and a comic mouth, whose tragedies are without dignity.

Ruth and Charley are a delight. One thanks Miss Tietjens for them, sincerely. Happy, clever, tolerant, they would have seemed a fairly normal couple in the old days. In those sweeter, simpler days when most friction had a silver lining.

But now so many novelists make a cult of unpleasantness, and see the

clouds as persistently as their predecessors saw the lining—to the exclusion of all else. Apparently, Miss Tietjens is going to be a novelist who sees both. A novelist who is biased in favor of neither the rich nor the poor; the foolishly happy, nor the abjectly miserable; nor the hopelessly dull.

She knows her Freud. Alas!—"Où sont les neiges d'antan!". Not very long ago, one would have said "She knows her Ibsen"!

Perhaps she leans a little heavily upon fortuitous happenings. But then, why shouldn't she? "Jake" rings true and truth is quite often stranger than fiction. Especially modern fiction.

ALICE SESSUMS LEOVY.



# THE DOUBLE DEALER

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## THE IMPERTURABLE LIBERAL

ONE week before the Earth collides with the planet Mars and ends all discussion of relativity, the *Liberal Weeklies* will appear with a dignified little note to the effect that the impending catastrophe will make no difference in the policy of the magazine. Will follow discussion of the agrarian question, the garment trade and then modestly in their proper place book reviews. For the Liberal is an imperturbable human.

He is not in great numbers. Perhaps his whole clan numbers one hundred thousand in the entire United States. His creed is quite simple. He believes that life at bottom is altogether sound; that a few changes in the Senate, in the Supreme Court, in the architecture of tenement houses, in the wage scale, etc, etc, etc., would bring about a new Heaven and a new Earth. He has no apparent ax to grind. For, whereas it may be charged against the Radical that he is opposed to things as they are because he has not the goods of life, and against the Conservative that he stands pat because he has, the Liberal would gain nothing by the effecting of his plans save a necessity to gather newer

dishes to wash. Being thus a little nobler than other men he adopts an impersonality toward events that is well-nigh godlike. War dismays him no more than a strike of the garment workers, since he can figure the cost of lives against ultimate rewards in a manner which is clairvoyant and mathematical and exact. Apparently he has taken for his motto the Nietzschean exhortation "Be hard"! His credo might be said to be, "I believe in the *New Republic*, *The Nation*, and *The Dial*; in Walter Lippmann, Oswald Garrison Villard and Francis Hackett and in the salvation of the world by amiable discussion."

Perhaps a closer examination of the species *liberalis* will be instructive. Through unsympathetic eyes some curious anomalies appear. For instance, your Liberal addresses his appeal to the masses, derives his support from the plutocrats and is hearkened to by other Liberals. For instance, though it be an article of his faith that art is the highest function of life, he treats it in reality as a dessert to be tagged onto the main wholesome business of life or perhaps as a tip to the waiter. Though he talks a great deal about Art (with a capital A) he passes with relief to the bituminous coal miners "problem." That is where his heart truly lies. Though his policies are usually not those of the two



great political parties, let one of their leaders lean for a second toward a liberal view of matters and he will be seized upon as the hope of American Democracy and "Mistered" all over the place. He is not a prohibitionist for he dreads to be called a puritan, nor is he an exponent of alcohol since he would blush to be thought a defender of intoxication.

Indeed the Liberal is *au fond* the most conservative of all men. His heart is tenderer than his brain. Moreover, he is fearful of the common people and never ceases to soothe them by suggested reform. Nevertheless his real sympathies lie with the white collared, the clean-handed. Luxury is the breath of his life. Only from a safe elevation does he work for the "sweaty night-capped" millions. But if he continues to hold to the same economics, the same philosophy that he had at Harvard we can find it in our hearts to palliate such faithfulness. As Giovanni Papini says, a gesture once commenced must be carried to its conclusion, at any cost.

## THE SENTIMENTAL MR. MENCKEN

**T**HAT Mr. Henry Louis Mencken of Baltimore, Maryland, wields a wicked stylus, goes without saying. Critic-at-large, penman plenipotentiary to these United States of America, he tells the world how and where to get off. That this world—"the worst of all possible worlds"—will have none of him, is, perhaps, a moot question. But that this same Mr. Mencken is an incur-

able sentimentalist, a blown in the glass Utopian, will, I am confident, be received with merry ha! ha's! from our hodiernal wiseacres. The statement, however, is not without foundation. Take up either of Mr. Mencken's books of "prejudices" and you will find scattered all through these brilliant rehashings from "The Aristocrat Among Magazines," innumerable give-aways. I shall not here rehash the rehashings. If you doubt me and are curious, get hold of the books and find out for yourself. Between the lines and down the line from "Ventures in Verse," juvenilia now forsworn by its author, through, "In Defense of Women," "A Book of Calumny," etc., to the latest feuilleton in the latest number of his and Mr. Nathan's entertaining medium, you may read, if you have an eye, the veiled confessions of an incorrigible sentimentalist—the idealist at bay smirking from behind a mass of mordant persiflage.

A man, more or less, convicts himself in his literary, especially in his poetic, judgments. Pick up at random a recent issue of the aforementioned magazine. Note the verse therein displayed. What find you? Certainly not what you would be led to expect from its editorial policy. The viriler, more individual product of the authentic skald is conspicuously absent. In its place you are regaled with flaming passionate poems, tawdry superficial lyrics, sonnets to spring, Jennie-kissed-me stuff—the stagnant sugar-water of yesterday done by "up-to-the-minute" Leigh Hunts and Mrs. Hemanses—in fact all the old metrical glucose. Strange, that the cynical Mr. Mencken, in the prose he prints, studiously avoids the romantic attitude;

whereas, Mr. Mencken, the "sentimental" indubitably dominates the lyrical exhibit.

In his ardent friendships this gentleman yet again betrays himself. Show me a fellow who has the potentiality for friendship, without being a Sentimental Tommy at heart. "There is little friendship in the world, and least of all, between equals." As true now as it was in Lord Verulam's day. Friends are rare. This most admirable relation between man and man is to be attained only by way of mutual sentiments and prejudices. Pardon the platitude. Mencken is a friend and has friends by the score. When he sponsors a man, he sponsors him extravagantly, he veritably lauds him to the seventieth heaven. Remark his eulogies of Conrad, Dreiser, Huneker, and Cabell—instances, of course, not unmeriting enthusiasm. But now and now, the capitious critic, seduced by the audacity of some cunning *flaneur*, runs amuck.

One does not go to Mr. Mencken for sound criticism. Still one reads him, because of, and despite, his unsoundness. As a daring, trenchant paragrapher he is without peer in America to-day. Stepfather to the American language; self-exalted Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Contemporary *Kultur*; press agent to the shade of Nietzsche; Buffoon Extraordinary to His Majesty, Beelzebub; critic *sans pareil* of "everything under the sun;" arbiter to the *intelligentsia*; caustic, pugnacious iconoclast of iconoclasts, he remains, beneath the obvious makeup, a blown in the glass Utopian, the incorrigible sentimentalist.

## THE LATE DISCREDITED WAR

WHAT has become of the blessed messengers of light who told us of the unnamed good that the world war would bring forth? I recall perusing a magazine article in a Red Cross hut near St. Nazaire just before embarking for the U. S. A. The writer quoted Latin; he quoted Greek, and he stated that the men who had fought in the war were the coming aristocrats of the country, that the lowliest dago private in the infantry would be one of the founders of the new society. He even besought the doughboy not to be too haughty towards those at home who could not pretend to fathom his Byronic melancholy and nobility. The author was a grey scientist.

Perhaps you are more familiar with the writings of the Coningsby Dawson School, "The Glory of the Trenches," "Ordeal by Fire," "The End of Materialism." In its more democratic form: "Do you think that the boys who went through the war, that were in the trenches are going to let themselves be misgoverned? You can bet your bottom dollar that they are not; they are going to be the greatest force for good government in the country," and so on—and so on. Ah, confident gentlemen, unconscious assistants of the Victory Loan Publicity Department, what cheer?

The "haughty aristocratic" doughboy came back to this country and gratefully accepted the first job he could land, nor did he care greatly whether his boss had been a ranking officer in a shock regiment or one of the thousand war mil-

lionaires. Gone after their spiral leggings are their martial manners. These "supermen" hide their nobility so well that they are often indistinguishable from the helots they live among. Occasionally one of them wears a slightly tarnished copper button in his lapel.

But what of the world they benefited, saved for democracy, virilized? Well some say it's in a bad way and shake their heads sorrowfully. The radicals say it is going to the dogs of Capitalism. The conservatives say it is going to the dogs of Bolshevism. As for virility—it is not on record that the ex-army man is less humble to any one above the rank of employee than, for all his high words, he was to his Company Commander; and he scampers in out of the very rain which drenched him in the gallant campaign of the Argonne Forest.

Yes, the doughboy learned something from the war. He learned that nobody loves the underdogs; that a soft word often turneth away work. He learned to admire the destiny of the man with the soft job behind the lines, the destiny of the man who never got scratched, but especially that of the man at home in blue serge, "the . . . . . who has my job."

Xerxes it is said wept to think that in a few score years there would be not a man jack left of his vast army. Minstrels and minnesingers of the virtues of bellicosity, do you weep that not a phrase remains of your lyric idealism? Not you—you are too busy manufacturing newer certitudes out of the dreams of the mob to whom you cater.

• • •

## THE GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL

**O**URS is a credulous public. The printed word is gospel. What we read we believe. It seems never to strike us that the hack who wrote this or that dictum is not infallible, that he is no more of an authority on his subject than, perhaps, we who swallow his muck. But we are visibly impressed. The magazines feature his stuff. He must be good or they would not print him. What a delusion!

This country, and every other country for that matter, is veritably overrun with these literary parasites. Futile creatures who, having tried everything else in the world, turn to the pen as a last resource. What gets them by? Tenacity, drudgery, oiliness, and the press agent. I maintain that the most colossal ass that ever lived, if he insists upon it, may ultimately see his name and nonsense in print. Of course he must toil. Not even this shabbiest objective is attained without exertion. He *must* toil. And then too, he must catch the trick. A certain callidity is necessary to the craft. But barring this, if he insists, ultimately he will find his name adorning the cover of *The Atlantic Monthly* or the enlightened entrails of *The Saturday Evening Post*. He will arrive if he must; he must if he will.

This by way of preamble. What really inspired these sapient observations was the astonishing success of such recent novels as "Main Street" and "Miss Lulu Bett," and, in a lesser degree, "Zell," "Moon-Calf" and "Poor White." "Poor White" despite its chaoticity (perhaps Mr. Harding will adopt the word)

is a remarkable book. But the others! Page the expletive. Mr. Lewis' masterpiece, now in its half million more or less, is simply blather—dull, pretentious blather—smeared on, overdone by a would-be wit of the lowest order. Perhaps, you think this a bit overstated, but take it or leave it, as one humble individual's reaction to this much bruited book. What put it over? A happy title, popular motif, and the press agent—that omnipresent sleuth, the press agent. Mind you, he is plural and lurks behind many guises. Quite often he is innocent of his office—a good critic gone wrong, or the girl at a gathering who hasn't read the book but thinks it "simply splendid." More often, though, he is but a poor hack hired by publishers to cry their wares. In the case of "Lulu," the footlights combined with paid puffs from dramatic Johnnies pushed along the work. Mr. Aikman's "Zell" might have been written by a Kansas City college boy. It is puerile, superficial, ambitious at best. The characters have no more life in them than a taxidermist's *fauna*—stuffed, stupid, unreal. "Moon-Calf" is slighter. If

this book is a novel, Miss Lowell's quondam bathtub episode is a poem.

But why go on. By now we are both bored. Let these neo-fictioneers go back to their vaudeville. What a show it is—two dollars the price of admission; two hours of tedium the reward. Read on, good people, whet your jaded tastes, if you can with these ephemeral fellows. But mind you, Thomas Hardy, Conrad, Anatole France, George Moore, Dreiser, Cabell and Willa Cather, live, breathe and write today. How many of you, I hazard, have read "The Return of the Native," "The Nigger of the Narcissus," "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard," "Evelyn Innes," "The Titan," "The Cream of the Jest" or "My Antonia"?

But read your Main Streets, revel in your boredom. Small wonder that Mrs. Wharton's "Age of Innocence," though a second rate novel, received the fiction award for last year. Here in all events is a book. Not, of course, *the* book, but a book done by a craftsman who knows her craft. Whereas—well, ours is indeed a credulous public. Ho, for The Great American Drive!

You hear of but one wise man, and all that he knew was—that he knew nothing.—*Congreve*.



# Porphyro in Akron

BY HART CRANE

Greeting the dawn  
A shift of rubber workers presses down  
South Main.  
With the stubbornness of muddy water  
It dwindles at each cross-line  
Until you feel the weight of many cars,  
North-bound, and East and West,  
Absorbing and conveying weariness,—  
Rumbling over the hills.

Akron, "high place,"—  
A bunch of smoking hills  
Among rolling Ohio hills.

The dark-skinned Greeks grin at each other  
In the streets and alleys.  
The Greek grins and fights with the Swede,—  
And the Fjords and the Aegean are remembered.

The plough, the sword,  
The trowel,—and the monkey wrench!  
O City, your axles need not the oil of song.  
I will whisper words to myself  
And put them in my pockets.  
I will go and pitch quoits with old men  
In the dust of a road.

## II

And some of them will be "Americans,"  
Using the latest ice-box and buying Fords;  
And others—

I remember one Sunday noon,  
Harry and I, "the gentlemen,"—seated around  
A table of raisin-jack and wine, our host  
Setting down a glass and saying,—  
"One month,—I go back rich.

I ride black horse . . . Have many sheep."  
And his wife, like a mountain, coming in  
With four tiny black-eyed girls around her  
Twinkling like little Christmas trees.

And some Sunday fiddlers,  
Roumanian business men,  
Played ragtime and dances before the door,  
And we overpayed them because we felt  
like it.

## III

Pull down the hotel counterpane  
And hitch yourself up to your book.

"Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeleine's fair  
breast,  
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and  
boon. . . "

"Connais tu le pays . . . ?"

Your mother sang that in a stuffy parlour  
One summer day in a little town  
Where you had started to grow.  
And you were outside as soon as you  
Could get away from the company  
To find the only rose on the bush  
in the front yard.

But look up, Porphyro—your toes  
Are ridiculously tapping  
The spindles at the foot of the bed.

The stars are drowned in a slow rain,  
And a hash of noises is slung up from the  
street.

You ought, really, to try to sleep,  
Even though, in this town, poetry's a  
Bedroom occupation.

# Dragon.

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY JEANNETTE MARKS

TIME—Toward the end of a hot summer afternoon.

PLACE—SCENE 1: The bedroom of a mansion on the Hudson.

SCENE 2: The same a few days later.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY

SHARON, a boy seven years old.

AUNT MARTHA, the old nurse.

VERNA, the young nurse.

THE MASTER.

SCENE I

Back in the shadows of a large, palatial room is a small bed in which the figure of a child can be seen. By the big windows two women sit. They are looking out upon the hillside, by turns they are silent or speak, but always they rock.

When they are silent the room is so quiet that the flight of a bird before the open window sounds loud, the breathing of the sleeping child comes and goes audibly, and the rattle of steam hammers rises in a clamor from the river valley below the house. From time to time a dog barks insistently.

The old nurse, Aunt Martha, has on a crisp white cap. But beneath it her brow is moist and the handkerchief about her neck is wet. The hair of the young nurse, Verna, is golden and uncovered. Against the wall the silhouettes of their rocking heads are seen very dim as they fan the wall space, and the only objects which suggest coolness.

OLD NURSE

(Yawning).

Dear, this scorching heat even in the great house!

VERNA

(Turning to look at the boy.)

But he's sleeping.

OLD NURSE

I feel as if all my old veins were swollen.

VERNA

I know. In this heat one seems bigger than one really is.

OLD NURSE

Many a time, Verna, have I sat this way by the boy's father far into the night to make him quiet.

VERNA

Was the Master delicate, too?

OLD NURSE

Yes, like the boy there. Obedient and lovable he was, too.

VERNA

What made him change?

OLD NURSE

How can I tell! He has never changed to me.

VERNA

But to her?

OLD NURSE

Yes, to her!

(She does not go on.)

VERNA

Well?

<sup>1</sup>(Copyright, 1920, by Jeannette Marks. Apply to the Author, care of The Double Dealer, for permission to act.)

OLD NURSE

*(Sighing).*

He loved her when he married her, but some say she was too good for him. And some say she was not good enough—

VERNA

*(Indignantly).*

They don't know, then.

OLD NURSE

They meant that she was weak where she ought to have been strong—that she ought to have met him on his own footing.

VERNA

Aunt Martha! As well ask the Blessed Virgin or Saint Cecilia to do that! She's too good for him, and no man on God's earth is good enough for her!

OLD NURSE

There, there, Verna! I'm not so sure a woman has the right to be too good for the man who loves her.

VERNA

*(Shocked).*

Aunt Martha!

OLD NURSE

*(Gently).*

Well, he loved her. I am old, Verna, and I have seen more than one woman whose unselfishness and goodness served for nothing but to defeat herself and the life of him who loved her.

VERNA

But, Aunt Martha—

OLD NURSE

I know, Child. But things that seemed plain to me when I was your age are not so simple now.

*(Touching her forehead).*

Dear, dear, my brow is dripping wet!

*(Touching her neck).*

And this handkerchief, too!

*(Looking out the window).*

See how that sand-pit burns in the hot sun!

VERNA

But, Aunt Martha, if the mistress—

OLD NURSE

There, Verna, 'tis not so easy to understand why people do not always come together. How is she?

VERNA

She's one day nearer her death, Aunt Martha.

OLD NURSE

Does she suffer still, Child?

VERNA

Not much, Aunt Martha, but she suffers.

OLD NURSE

Dear, dear, I'm old and this heat is terrible even for me!

VERNA

*(Looking out the windows).*

The air fairly shakes with it.

*(Long metallic rattling and screaming are heard).*

They are swinging the buckets. How the cranes scream!

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, Child, yes. But I'm accustomed to it and don't notice the noise. Now I hear it. It sounds like pain.

VERNA

Yes, and she notices it today.

AUNT MARTHA

*(Shaking her head).*

Yes, yes, the poor darling has suffered so!

VERNA

*(Bitterly).*

And the Master the cause.

AUNT MARTHA

*(With patience).*

I remember that, Verna. When I think of what he was once—well, I cannot understand.

VERNA

It is almost over for her.

AUNT MARTHA

Has he been in her room today?

VERNA

Yes, he was there this afternoon, Aunt Martha.

AUNT MARTHA

What did he do?

VERNA

He held one of the yellow curtains aside and looked down on the foundries. Suddenly he said, "You are troubled by the foundry noise?" She sighed and seemed grateful because he had thought of it.

AUNT MARTHA

What did she say?

VERNA

She said nothing. The room was so close. The smell of the molten metal mounting up to the windows. It turned me faint. There was the sickish smell, too, of the chestnut blossoms beneath the house.

AUNT MARTHA

The air is heavy with their thick, sweet smell. See, the leaves out there in the garden hang wilting and without stirring.

VERNA

Think of men working in that mouth of hell! Not a breath of air even up here! How hot and loud the birds sound singing out there in the elm!

AUNT MARTHA

To my old eyes, you look cool, Child, in that white dress.

VERNA

But I'm not, Aunt Martha. If only the birds wouldn't sing so and that dog would stop its barking.

AUNT MARTHA

I wonder where it is?

VERNA

From the Mistress' windows where I was sitting all day, the river looked like molten steel.

AUNT MARTHA

Did the Master say anything to her?

VERNA

Nothing. When he held the curtain aside I saw that he was crying.

AUNT MARTHA

Poor boy, poor boy, what a reckoning he has to pay!

*(She draws a long deep breath).*

Verna, did I ever show you that picture I have of him when he was a lad?

VERNA

No, Aunt Martha.

AUNT MARTHA

He seemed like my own boy then. I'm old now, but it is all as if it were yesterday.

VERNA

The doctor has told him, Aunt Martha.

AUNT MARTHA

God pity him! Did they talk at all, Child?

VERNA

No, he's killed her and what is there for him to say? He gave her this plague of which she dies. He has broken her heart day by day. Aunt Martha, he has crushed her under his great iron heel the way he crushes his workmen. He—

AUNT MARTHA

Hush, hush, Child, it is cruel to speak so!



VERNA

I won't hush! He's been cruel as the cruelest murderer.

AUNT MARTHA

Hush! Hush! Hush! Dear God, how hot it is!

VERNA

*(Looking over towards the child).*

He sleeps too heavily to wake.

*The Old Nurse rises slowly and heavily. She takes a dish of cool water and sponges off the temples of the sleeping boy.*

AUNT MARTHA

He breathes in gasps with this hot air.

VERNA

Even the linen straps of my apron are hot to the hand. Poor Mistress, she must suffer more because of this!

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, such heat have I never known, old woman that I am. In the soles of my old feet a pulse beats.

VERNA

My arms are hot and my eyes ache so!

*(She rubs her eyes and flaming cheeks).*

It's as if sand from the pit yonder had been put in them.

AUNT MARTHA

Does she know that she is going?

VERNA

She knows that she is going. When the Master was leaving the room, she looked up out of her white face, and, taking the hand he would not reach out to her, she kissed it.

AUNT MARTHA

She loves him still.

VERNA

I cannot understand, Aunt Martha.

AUNT MARTHA

What did he do?

VERNA

He bowed his head and went out. He said nothing; there was nothing to say, I suppose.

AUNT MARTHA

What has she said since then?

VERNA

Nothing. She lies there, those beautiful eyes still beautiful. She seems to be dreaming or thinking or something, and looking over the roofs of the foundry down upon the Hudson. Once she asked for Sharon.

AUNT MARTHA

Did you tell her the boy was ill?

VERNA

No, I said he slept. Did the Master come in here?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, before Sharon fell asleep.

VERNA

What did he say?

AUNT MARTHA

Nothing. He wanted to fondle the lad. But Sharon drew away and turned his face to the wall.

VERNA

Always the same!

AUNT MARTHA

Always the same!

*(She stops rocking and fans herself).*

One's breath scorches. Thank God, the sun is setting behind the hill.

VERNA

Red as if it had been swung up from the foundry in a bucket-full of metal. See how those black clouds strap the face of it!

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, Child, like a grating. There'll be a storm before long.

VERNA

Aunt Martha, was Sharon always afraid of his father?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, time and again have I seen him shake like a leaf when he saw his father coming. The Master sees it, and he's eating his heart out for the boy's love.

VERNA

*(A little vindictiveness in her voice).*

And can't get it! How much do you suppose the boy knows about what his father has done to his mother and those other poor women bodies?

AUNT MARTHA

Seven years old! How could he know anything, Verna?

VERNA

Then maybe it's because he feels makes him behave like this.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, maybe it's that! Hush!

*There is a stir from the bed and both women turn to look.*

SHARON

*(In childish treble).*

Mother!

AUNT MARTHA

No, Sharon, your mother's ill today.

SHARON

Could I see her, Nurse? Just once?

AUNT MARTHA

Perhaps a little later.

SHARON

I'm awake now. Couldn't she come in to me?

AUNT MARTHA

Not now.

SHARON

Has she asked about me this afternoon, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

Not yet, darling.

SHARON

If she came in when I'd gone to sleep again, would she know I loved her?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, darling. Nurse would tell her so.

SHARON

Because I do. Are other boys' mothers so beautiful as mine?

AUNT MARTHA

Probably not.

VERNA

*(Sotto voce).*

What you are telling him!

SHARON

What's that, Verna?

VERNA

Nothing.

SHARON

I prickle all over.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, it's the terrible heat.

*(Something strikes against the window).*

SHARON

What's that, Nurse, out there?

AUNT MARTHA

Just a bird flying home, Sharon.

SHARON

I heard him strike against the window, Nurse. Will he come back?

VERNA

Not if he was started in the other direction.

SHARON

Listen! I hear him. He is coming back.

*(A bird sings).*

Can Mother hear him?

AUNT MARTHA

Perhaps, darling.

*(Holding up his little hand).*

SHARON

Listen! Now, he's coming nearer and nearer. Now he's going away. Oh, Nurse, don't let him go away!

VERNA

What queer notions that child has!

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, he's different.

SHARON

Won't the bird come again, Nurse?

VERNA

*(Leaving the room).*

There, I'll go tell him to come back.

SHARON

*(Trustfully).*

Yes, do, please.

AUNT MARTHA

Now go to sleep again, Sharon.

*(The Old Nurse bends over him, bathes his temples again in the cool water, turns his pillow, kisses him and puts her old hands over his eyes).*

*(For a minute he is quiet and there is no sound but the cawing of the crows, the continuous fretful barking of a dog and the thump of the steam hammers from the foundry below).*

SHARON

*(Stirring restlessly).*

Nurse, tell me about the Dragon, do!

AUNT MARTHA

Dear me, Child, that old, old story! You don't want that again.

SHARON.

Yes, I do.

AUNT MARTHA

What makes you keep asking for it?

SHARON.

'Cause I'm thinking about it, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

Thinking! Thinking what, darling?

SHARON.

I can't tell you just what, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

Well, it is no story for you, with the night coming on.

SHARON.

It isn't night yet, Nurse. I see a patch of yellow sky.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, yellow where the winds whirl. There's mischief brewing there, Child.

SHARON

Tell me just this once, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

Dear, and it makes one hot to think of dragons.

SHARON

Just this once, please, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

And will you sleep after I've told you?

SHARON

Yes, truly. But I'm so hot; take me up and tell me by the window.

*(The Old Nurse leans over, lays back the sheet and gathers Sharon into her arms. She carries him to the window and sits down with him in her lap, his head against her old bosom).*

AUNT MARTHA

See out there, laddie? Even in this heat there are places out there which seem deep and cool.

SHARON

Yes, I see—like dark velvet.

AUNT MARTHA

The air is like a hot pulse, it comes and goes so.

SHARON

Nurse, what makes that chestnut plume out there bend this way?

AUNT MARTHA

I don't know. It means something,—like this hush.

SHARON

What are you waiting for, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

Nothing, Child. It's the storm coming, and it will be here before long.

SHARON

Then begin, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

There, don't be impatient. Well, let me see, once upon a time there was a valley in which a dragon lived, but no human beings. And the valley was shut in by mountains so high that neither the sunrise nor the sunset ever saw into the valley.

At its entrance there was ice—think, darling, ice!

SHARON

Why do you suppose there was ice there, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

You remember, I told you before it's because dragons are naturally hot and need to keep cool.

SHARON

Oh!

AUNT MARTHA

It was near that entrance the Dragon grew rich, for it was there he killed kings and warriors.

SHARON

What did he do with the kings and warrior he killed, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

Ate them, Child, of course.

SHARON

Oh!

AUNT MARTHA

But this particular dragon had a human boy whom he loved, a boy with golden locks and blue eyes.

SHARON

And he didn't eat his own boy, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

Certainly not. That would be monstrous.

SHARON

Nurse, that boy's mother died, when she found out that boy's father was a dragon, didn't she?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, but usually, child, he looked just like a warrior, not like a dragon at all.

SHARON

What made him a dragon, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

How can I tell? And I'll not go on, Boy, if you keep interrupting me.

(Sharon presses his head closer to her shoulder).

SHARON

And then, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

To his little boy the dragon always seemed a noble warrior, and that is as it should be, child. But the boy had heard the trees and flowers and many living and beautiful things telling tales of a Wicked Dragon who lived in the valley.

SHARON

Can they really tell tales?

AUNT MARTHA

Oh, yes, there's nothing living but that tells its tale.

SHARON

But just the same, that Dragon's boy didn't guess that his father was a dragon?

AUNT MARTHA

No, no, he never even dreamed of such a thing. Well, one day the son explained to the father that he wanted to kill that evil old dragon.

SHARON

What did the father say, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

The father replied that perhaps the dragon wasn't as evil as people said



he was, for maybe it was his fate to love human blood. The son kept on begging for a weapon with which to kill the dragon, till finally the father said he would give it to him but that even without the sword he might be able to pierce the wretched dragon to the heart. After this the poor dragon neither slept nor ate for three whole days. At last he went to the entrance of the valley where the great ice cliffs were, and there he killed an old warrior who had a beautiful daughter, and ate him.

SHARON

Was the Dragon's boy like me, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

He was a deal bigger nor you, child. Well, to make a long story short, the son was young and brave and he rode fast and far.

*(Something strikes against the window. Sharon trembles).*

SHARON.

What's that, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

Just another bird, darling. See, it's growing darker and they're flying home before the storm. The poor little bird missed its way and struck on the window frame.

SHARON

Does he want to come in, Nurse?

AUNT MARTHA

No, it's his own nest he's looking for.

SHARON

Nurse, something opened its mouth wide down there in the valley. Is it the dragon's mouth?

AUNT MARTHA

There, child, don't be foolish. It was one of the stacks of your father's foundry, belching flame.

SHARON

Oh, I thought it was the dragon's mouth! Someone's coming, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, this way.

*(The child presses his head deeper into her bosom).*

SHARON

Is it the dragon coming?

AUNT MARTHA

Hush, Sharon, it's your father's step. . . . Yes, sir, yes, he heard you coming.

*(The old woman rises, while Sharon clings still closer to her and begins to cry).*

There, there, it's hot; and he's sick, Master, and fretful.

THE MASTER.

Let me have him. Come!

*(But Sharon shrinks away and begins to cry out wildly).*

SHARON

It's the dragon, the dragon! Take him away, Nurse, take him away!

AUNT MARTHA

There, sir, don't mind, sir! I've been telling him stories, and, ill as he is, he gets confused.

*(The old woman walks up and down the floor with the child, trying to soothe him).*

Listen! It's thundering now, Master, dear. If only it would grow cooler!

*(She turns to the Master. His eyes are on the child, a scowl between his eyebrows, and in the eyes themselves a pleading, savage look. Only his open, hanging hands are limp).*

AUNT MARTHA

*(Coaxingly).*

There now, Boy, won't you go to your Father?

*(But again comes the same cry of terror and the same words).*

AUNT MARTHA

*(Crossly).*

Tut! such foolishness! It's your own Father, Sharon—You won't go? He's an odd child, Master, and I am ashamed.

VERNA

*(Running into the room).*

Sir, sir, come quickly! I've been looking for you; Mistress—

*(Before she can finish, he is gone, the floors of the big house shaking under his heavy running tread).*

*(Verna pauses for a moment, makes signs to the old Nurse, and she, too, is gone, in her haste leaving the door open. Martha looks after her. She can be seen hurrying down the gallery to the furthest door of all. An ominous yellow light floods through the skylights above the big central lobby, and shines on stone balustrades and on brasses).*

AUNT MARTHA

*(Whispering to herself as she puts the child back on his bed).*

Dear, in such heat!

SHARON

What is it, Nurse? What's the matter?

AUNT MARTHA

It's the storm coming?

SHARON

Did someone call?

AUNT MARTHA

No, it's the sound of the wind beginning to cry. The storm is coming now.

SHARON

Mother!...I heard Mother calling.

AUNT MARTHA

No, she's ill today.

*(Sharon springs up).*

SHARON

Mother! I'm here!

*(The old woman's face is frightened. She is trying to hush the boy's cries for his mother when another bird, driven by the storm, now fairly upon them, strikes against the sill and falls into the room).*

*(The sky is already vivid with flashes of lightning, followed closely by crashes of thunder, in between which the moaning and crying of the wind can be heard).*

AUNT MARTHA

No coolness even yet!

SHARON

What's that, Nurse? Is that the dragon's tongue licking?

AUNT MARTHA

It's the lightning, child, the storm is on us. Hot as it is, I must close the windows.

*(A vivid flash is followed by a peal of thunder. For a minute everything in the room, the wide eyes of the child, the anxious wrinkled face of the old woman, the frames of the window panes, the brass knobs of the fire irons, the flat surface of the mirror, quiver and glare with the lightning).*

*(Sharon is sobbing).*

SHARON

The dragon's roaring after us, Nurse.

AUNT MARTHA

Hush, it's the thunder, Child.

*(For a few seconds nothing can be heard inside the room except the loud crying of the child, and outside the scream of the wind. Martha has moved her rocking chair away from the window and over to the bed. She tries to tell him that it can not last long, but her voice is drowned in the tumult).*

*(By this time the old Nurse is rock-*

ing the child and praying. Through the open door of the bedroom she can see out into the great galleries of the house. In their fear the servants have forgotten to draw the curtains and light the lamps, and the lightning plays about the great lobby, now slipping like a lizard down the polished balustrades, then gleaming on the brass rods which hold the stair carpet, now flashing on the polished vases set on the landings, then throwing into relief rows of the closed bedroom doors about the balcony).

(Every instant does the storm seem to center more and more, as if it were a magnet, about the great house. Without cessation now, come the thrusts of lightning, until stairways, balustrades, vases, rods, white doors, and the wide terrified eyes of the child, flicker and quiver with light. The old woman has ceased to rock; she no longer speaks with the child. But she waits, her eyes patient, her lips murmuring the words of a prayer, for what she knows is to be the end).

(Suddenly there is a blinding flash, a noise as if the whole big roof had been ripped apart, an instant of silence, and a burst of flame).

## SCENE II

(A few days later in the same bedroom of the great house sit the old Nurse and the young Nurse, rocking as before).

(In the room everything is as it has been when the storm struck the house. The bed in the distant corner, the child on it, his face if anything, paler, the beautiful furnishings of the princely room, the hangings—not a thing in it is

altered. Yet through the open door can be seen where a portion of the stone balustrade has been torn away, the walls blackened, and upstairs on the balcony is a great rent which splits the ceiling from that furthest door, now no longer white, back to the ceiling outside the child's bedroom. That distant door swings open, partly charred, and through the black interior of the burned-out chamber can be seen a peaceful twilight river world. Outside the wind is blowing soft and cool through the trees, and in the clear, dusky sky little stars are already twinkling).

(Old Martha looks at the charred door and sighs).

AUNT MARTHA

I miss him so!

VERNA

I suppose you do.

AUNT MARTHA

No one can understand, despite all the wrong he did, how good the Master was to me. And he was once my boy. Dear God, I am an old woman, but I never forget that he was my boy once!

(The child in the bed moves).

VERNA

There, Sharon, go to sleep.

SHARON

I want Mother. Hasn't she asked yet?

VERNA

Nurse told you she'd gone away, and she can't come just now.

SHARON

Oh!—Nurse, what was the end of the story?

AUNT MARTHA

What story?

SHARON

*(Fretfully).*

You know, about the dragon.

VERNA

Come, Aunt Martha, he's better off alone; it's cool now; let's leave him.

AUNT MARTHA

Nay, I don't take up with these new-fangled notions, Verna. My place is here beside the boy's bed, as it was beside his father's.

SHARON

Nurse, I want the story. Nurse, you tell me that story!

VERNA

Aunt Martha, don't tell him. It's enough, after what the child's been through, to throw him into a fit.

SHARON

Nurse, you promised, and I want to know the end.

AUNT MARTHA

I did promise. And I don't know that the story would be so bad for him, after all.

SHARON

You promised,—you know you did.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, Sharon! And will you go to sleep then?

SHARON

I will when I know the end.

*(With undisguised disapproval the young Nurse sits by while the old woman takes up the tale where she has left it, and tells on to the end of the story about the Dragon).*

AUNT MARTHA

Well, let me see where we were. The Dragon's son met the beautiful daughter of the warrior his father had killed and eaten.

SHARON

Nurse, then he was the one he'd killed and eaten?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, Child.

*(The old woman sighs wearily, as if it were hard to go on with the tale).*

Well, let me see. The beautiful daughter wept. Then the son took the princess's hands and swore not to eat or to drink until he had killed the Dragon.

SHARON

Nurse, was that really his father?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, child. Why do you always ask that question every time I tell you the story?

SHARON

'Cause, Nurse, I'm thinking.

AUNT MARTHA

Well, let me see. Of course the Dragon was unhappy because he knew that his son would keep his oath; also he knew that the dragon would not come in his way. But it was breaking the Dragon father's heart to see the son starving to death, so he decided to give himself up. Let me see. To make a long story short; the young warrior almost died from hunger and thirst, and he was just about to die when his father told him to go, after sunset, ten steps towards the river bank, and that there he would surely find the Dragon.

SHARON

Was it the Hudson?

AUNT MARTHA

No.

SHARON

But that was his own father, Nurse?



AUNT MARTHA

Yes, and he did, and he rushed upon the poor Dragon; but before he could strike him with his sword, the Dragon's heart broke and he was dead. All the young warrior could do was to stand there wondering why there were tears in the dragon's eyes.

SHARON

Do dragons *really* have broken hearts?

AUNT MARTHA

I suppose sometimes they do, Boy. You see this dragon loved his son so very much.

*(Sharon sighs contentedly).*

SHARON

And that's the end, Nurse? And it was *that* Dragon came got me when the house was burning?

AUNT MARTHA

No, no, Sharon; it was your father got you.

SHARON

But I saw his eyes, Nurse, and they cried; and you said the Dragon—

AUNT MARTHA

Hush, not another word about it. You must go to sleep now.

SHARON

Yes, I will, Nurse, but he took you out, too.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, Sharon, it was your father carried me through the burning hallway.

*(The boy closes his eyes and tugs the covers up about his neck and lies very still).*

*(For a few seconds the two women watch him).*

AUNT MARTHA

There are stars out there.

VERNA

Yes, and the wind blows soft and cool.

*(From the foundries below, lying dark and silent by the Hudson's edge, no noise comes).*

AUNT MARTHA

How strange it seems to have the foundries still.

VERNA

Yes, not a sound.

*(Within the room the child's breathing becomes more and more audible. The old Nurse rises, lights a candle, and goes over to the bedside. Shading the candle light from the child's eyes, she gazes down upon him, upon the delicate troubled face, the blue eyelids, the little parted lips, and one hand thrown back above his head. Closer the old woman looks, whispering).*

AUNT MARTHA

Dear God, how like him, how like him!

VERNA

His lashes are wet and glisten.

AUNT MARTHA

I see nothing.

*(Then satisfied that he sleeps, she steals back to her rocking chair).*

*(In low voices the two women go on talking).*

AUNT MARTHA

It seems a bad dream, Verna—all these years, and I'm old and I've caught the trick of going back more and more to the years when the Master himself was just a little boy. Night and day I'm trying to satisfy myself how this has all happened. The past, even forty years ago, when he lay a tiny speck of a baby in my arms, is clearer now than last week can ever be. How was it, Verna?

He came and got the child and I waited? And then he came and got me—and that's all I seem to know.

VERNA

And then, Aunt Martha, don't you remember he went to fetch out the poor dead Mistress, and the lightning struck again, and killed him just as he reached the bed where she was lying. And the bed and everything in the room was burned, and they together. And then don't you remember, Aunt Martha, the men from the foundry saved all the house from burning by playing the water on it?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, yes, Verna, that's it; I forget each time you tell me. You were in the house?

VERNA

No, Aunt Martha, I ran out when the lightning struck first, and after that the men saved the house.

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, dear God, the house!

SHARON

*(Calling from the bed).*

Nurse!

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, I'm here.

SHARON

Nurse, that Dragon, even if he was a Dragon, loved his boy a good deal, to die for him, didn't he?

AUNT MARTHA

Yes, darling, he loved him better than anything else in the world.

SHARON

Nurse, I wished he hadn't had those tears in his eyes—

*(The treble voice chokes, and a little hand brushes away tears)*

AUNT MARTHA

There, there, of course you do, darling. You see the poor Dragon loved his boy.

SHARON

Nurse, I think that was a pretty good Dragon after all.

*(Curtain)*

## Be Drunken

Be always drunken. Nothing else matters: that is the only question. If you would not feel the horrible burden of Time weighing on your shoulders and crushing you to the earth, be drunken continually.

Drunken with what? With wine, with poetry, or with virtue, as you will. But be Drunken.

And if sometimes, on the stairs of a palace, or on the green side of a ditch, or in the dreary solitude of your own room, you should awaken and the drunkenness be half or wholly slipped away from you, ask of the wind, or of the wave, or of the star, or of the bird, or of the clock, of whatever flies, or sighs, or sings, or speaks, ask what hour it is; and the wind, wave, star, bird, clock will answer you: "It is the hour to be drunken! Be drunken, if you would not be martyred slaves of Time; be drunken continually! With wine, with poetry, or with virtue, as you will."—*Baudelaire*.

# On Cats and Clowns

BY ARTHUR SYMONS

CATS have always had a peculiar fascination for me. They are

Oriental, sombre, mysterious, enigmatical, subtle, cruel, highly sensitive; it is in their eyes that their magic resides. When they undulate they remind me of the undulation of the panthers. Only, when we see these wild animals, they are caged. In their cages they pass a mournful existence nobly, each after his kind, in loneliness or in unwilling companionship; their eyes look past us without seeing us; we have no power over their concentration within the muscles of their vivid limbs or within the coils of their subtle bodies. Humanity, at its best, has much to be ashamed of, physically, beside the supreme physical perfection of the panther and the snake. When cats gaze fixedly into our eyes, there is in their eyes something so inhuman, so remote from us, that their fascination has for us something unholy. All animals are unashamed: cats seem to me the most shameless of all the animals, yet the soul of their flesh is uncontaminated by humiliation.

The Cat's origin seems to be unknown; the supposition is that cats were heard of about 1668 before the birth of Christ. That they were sacred in Egypt we know for certain: Plutarch in his Treatise on Isis and Osiris says that the image of a Cat was placed on the summit of the sistrum as a symbol of the Moon, because of the variety of its skin and because it wandered at night,

and because it has as many rings as the days of the Moon; the fact is that the pupils of its eyes grow larger at the time of the full moon and diminish as she diminishes.

Verlaine, as he assured me in Paris, had none of Baudelaire's almost abnormal passion for cats: Baudelaire who, feline by temperament, on that particular side of his genius, possessed, in an excessive degree, electricity; which, in cats, is part of their fascination. As Baudelaire wandered in Paris, if a cat appeared at a street-corner, or on the pavements, he went up to him, attracted him by his diabolical insinuations, took him in his arms and caressed him. In l'Hotel Pimodan, where Baudelaire lived, one would find him uttering his paradoxes on cats before the famous Maryx dressed in a white robe, starred in a bizarre fashion with red spots like drops of blood, gazing up at him from the divan with her Oriental indolence, as she shifted her rings from her left hand to her right hand, hands as perfect as the beauty of her body.

Together with cats and women and adventures, together with his prose and verse and his translations, Baudelaire found something fascinating in clowns and acrobats. Certainly the most amusing fair I ever saw was the Gingerbread Fair at Vincennes, in 1896, when I went with Remy de Gourmont and Havelock Ellis. The sun hurt me like a furnace; but nothing like the heat in Moscow in the summer of 1897.

"It is not given to every man," wrote Baudelaire, "to take a bath of multitude; to play upon crowds is an art; and he alone can plunge, at the expense of human kind, into a debauch of vitality, to whom a fairy has bequeathed in his cradle the love of masks and disguises, the hate of home and the passion of travel. He who does not know how to people his solitude does not know, either, how to be alone in a crowd." The illusion when I left that fair at half past eleven was that of seeing languishing Pierrots, and human dolls turning, with painted smiles, and the dance of shadows of the last lingerers.

From the time when Walter Pater said to me: "An English clown would not have looked at a wolf if he could have seen a tiger," that inspired phrase came back to me, year after year, when I haunted the music-halls, and I knew for certain that none of these curious clowns had in them one touch of imagination. The tragedy of them is that their one and only *métier* is to amuse the crowd; and that as a matter of fact, I know not how many of them were not, in private life, absolutely serious. Always the traditional costume, the dabs of ugly and disfiguring paint, the powder under the paint; and, for the rest, they have their own choice in their jests.

Baudelaire in *De l'Essence du Rire et généralement du Comique dans les Arts Plastiques* simply gives us his own obsessions in regard to what is comic and what is laughable; and he says in one sentence a wonderful thing: "The Indian and Chinese idols ignored the fact that they were ridiculous; it is in

us, who are Christians, that the comic exists." One has always to distinguish joy from laughter; and to realize that comedy is an imitation mixed with a certain creative faculty, which becomes grotesque when one's laughter is immoderate "Comique absolu:" does that ever actually exist? Baudelaire, to prove his point if any such point can be proved, gives his impressions of the bizarre stories of Hoffmann, in which he finds inspired conversations and critical dialogues; and he chooses his finest story, *La Princesse Brambilla*. There Giglio Fava, the comic actor who has a double personality, changes at his will his personalities, and declares himself the sworn enemy of the Assyrian Cornelio Chiapperi; and when he becomes an Assyrian prince, he pours out before the Princess all the venom of his scorn on his rival; whom he has changed into a miserable actor condemned to call himself Giglio Fava.

The first English Pantomime Baudelaire saw was given at the Théâtre des Variétés, when he was struck by their manner of conveying comical effects; the distinguishing quality being violence. Pierrot was not the pale lunatic figure of tradition; he rushed in like a whirlwind and his laughter was like thunder; above the powder on his face he had painted two enormous spots of pure rouge; he had lengthened his mouth by the use of carmine. Morally he was the Pierrot all the world knows, always accompanied by Harlequin and Columbine and Cassandra and Leandre and the Bolognese Doctor. What this clown-Pierrot created was the vertigo of the hyperbole. Then the Cacodemon of absolute Comedy seized on the whole



tiocop who in their extraordinary gestures showed that they felt themselves hurled into a new existence; they made the signs of windmills with their arms, they seemed like windmills tormented by a tempest; and in the midst of this delirium Harlequin and Columbine escaped, dancing, into the world of more wonderful adventures.

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, whose taste for the Circus began in his youth, and which never left him, designed with coloured crayons in 1897 a series of twenty-two amazing miracles in which the purity of his colours and the use of mediums he had never used before shows the certainty of himself to the divining imagination—the certainty

that his genius is practically intact. I refer to the huge Album, *Au Cirque*, a priceless possession, which makes me wonder more than ever at Lautrec's flame-like creations. There is in them smoke and fire; the fumes of hell and the smoke of the clouds that hang in mid air between hell and heaven. A god's veiled visage takes veritable shape; and on his lips there is a bitter irony. Did the obscure and fatal initiation of his madness—he was then supposed to be mad—reveal to him visions he had never seen before, visions of worlds unrealized, Hamlet's disembodied visions? I can but imagine that he did; and most certainly from his creation of *Au Cirque* I have referred to.

## Mummy

BY HELEN UNDERWOOD HOYT

Oh name me not for what I seem to be  
 From these wise thoughts I mouthe so prettily:  
 They are but cover of the self I am  
 And for my broken heart bandage of sham—  
 A painted bandage like a mummy case,  
 Mask for my weeping, mask for my soul's face.  
 For I have bound me in wisdom close and tight;  
 Hidden I live, and secret from all light.  
 And am I fair who knows or am I wise,  
 And who shall tear the linen from my eyes  
 Or strip the mask off winded layer by layer  
 Until my hidden soul stands proud and bare?  
 Oh careful words, oh long deceiving sound  
 That wraps my true thought and my sorrow round,  
 Hold sure, oh painted wisdom, do not slip  
 Lest trembling knee be seen, or quivering lip!

# A Very Satisfactory God

BY CHARLES J. FINGER

THE lecture was interesting enough in its way and McNabb was felicitous, but he seemed to be filled with a kind of intellectual scorn, sounding that blatantly educated note you hear in sixth rate school superintendents and Chatauquan lecturers. He was a small man, neatly made and his age was hard to guess. He might have been fifty, sixty or seventy, for he was what is called well preserved. Evidently, his lines in life had been cast in pleasant places. As he stood on the little platform, his face was blotted out in a yellow halo because of the odd fashion in which the two oil lamps were hung. It was a poor place for a decent lecture, for it was a very poky, dirty untidy country school house and the seats were the old-time, comfortless church pews, and the building itself was perched at the base of a hill, so that while it was admirably sheltered from the undue violence of the elements, any breeze on a sultry night was effectually choked off. A cheerless place enough, and, if you saw it as I did, doubtless you would sigh as I did remembering that the youth of the south often is educated in such hopeless places. Besides, it was stuffy in there and the rough path by which one climbed to the place was discouraging, for there were loose stones in the way and climbing up the steep slope from the roadway was tiring enough. I was warm when I arrived; clammy warm.

However, the affair being finished, we went to Nelson's place across the hill

and had Budweiser under an apple tree, for he had acted the part of the wise virgin when the country went dry. It was pleasantly cool under the stars and the bottles were grateful to the touch with the light dew upon them that told of honest pleasure. Remembering, seeing in my mind's eye the amber and white in those cool glasses, I get nervously irritable with the prohibition fanatics.

There was one thing told of by Nelson that night that sticks in my mind. With his glass resting on the arm of his chair and his legs comfortably stretched out, McNabb had said, in relation to something or other, "the starry heavens have ever stimulated human imagination" and so led to the topic. La Monte of the University, who is great on mythology, said something or other about traces of a belief in Mercury among the Celts and referred to some work on the Mythology of the Races, and for a time, it looked as if we would be launched upon an entirely inconclusive controversy, for someone else seriously quoted the couplet:

"Jack fell down and broke his crown  
and Jill came tumbling after,"  
contending that Jack and Jill were the Hjuke and Bil of the Edda and signified the waxing and waning of the moon, their bucket indicating the dependence of rainfall on her phases. You know the kind of stuff. Nelson bluntly said that he doubted whether man was capable of progression, holding that Archi-

medes or Aristotle would find us nationally pretty small potatoes, and that started McNabb off again.

He snatched at the phrase "human development." "I do not agree," he said. "We live in one of those rare periods of human development, when many mighty changes replete with rich sources of new emotion, with deep springs of new feeling and action, with new and purer ideals—"

Nelson gave a quick, verbal upper-cut so to speak. "Oh, yes. Stack W. J. B. up against Aristophanes, Sumner in front of Rabelais. Your rich sources of new emotion, begad!"

It became confused and general then, with talk of ouija boards and superstitions, of newspaper science and the *New York Times* telling people that the light of a candle in a window attracted lightning and so on. There were testimonies by way of evidence that culture and ignorance existed side by side. Now and then some phrase shot out like a sky rocket from one or the other, for a half dozen men can chatter like magpies. I remember one or two such, notable lights as it were, in a maze of verbal pyrotechnics. For instance: "We are open-mouthed for anything that's new." "Doubt everywhere; doubt and muddle because we have no standard of values of our own." "Bowled over when authority rears its head."

Out of the melee, McNabb, the theorist fierce and unconquered dragged in something about psychology, a little testily perhaps, and Nelson seemed to override him. I pulled myself out of a mood of reminiscence in which Chicago figured largely, with Michigan Boulevard at night, that big red expanding and

contracting electric light sign, a stein of beer and a roof garden all most inextricably mixed to find that Nelson was talking very evenly.

"Much of what passes for mythology and religious belief," he was saying, "is a kind of mosaic. Missionary tales are passed round and distorted. There are explorers and runaways too and the tales they tell, tales of their home, passed from mouth to mouth become misty so that much that we hear of savage beliefs is a mere echo of our own beliefs."

McNabb took a half-glass of beer at a gulp to steady his nerve, opened his mouth and said desperately, "But Max Muller—" Nelson seemed unconscious of the interruption and went on, so McNabb, quite discouraged for the moment, put his hands in his pockets, leaned back in his chair and shook his head dolefully.

"For instance," said Nelson, "there was a fellow on the Gold Coast who set out to give me his notion of the Land of the Dead, and, listening carefully, I came to the conclusion that he was describing a political parade marching about in some Sahara oasis. There seemed to be bicycles, tall hats, dancing girls and camels mixed in with brass bands and things like that, and herds of oxen, too, sacrificed to some deity. And the god had red whiskers. There was no doubt of that. The fellow pulled his own beard, tugged it, then, to make me understand, took a bit of a red sash he had and fitted it to his chin. He was quite earnest about it and took my expressed doubt in sorrow. He couldn't get over it. It worried him. So one day he led me to an old man with a snake-like eye and fingers gnarled and

hooked like a bird's claw. Lord only knows how old he was. With those chaps one gets a notion of vast antiquity. His head was like a skull with parchment over it—you know, parchment that had been pulled over when wet and then left to dry. This fellow was the guardian of the proofs, I gathered. There was some talk, with my man pleading and the old fellow making much mystery and demur, but, finally, he produced a match-box and took from it a scrap of paper. I tell you, you wouldn't handle a page of the original Shakespeare manuscript with greater care than the old chap handled that. And what do you suppose it was? . . . A picture torn from an old *Harper's Weekly*, a picture of a Blaine parade on Broadway. To them it was proof enough; evidence of things unseen. But that wasn't all, for there was a greater treasure still. No museum curator would handle a rare coin with more reverence, nor priest a relic. It was a wrapper from one of those Kansas City corned beef cans, the kind put up for export. You've seen the thing: a gaudily colored affair, highly glazed. It was a picture of a mounted man with a super-buggy whip, driving an immense herd of cattle to a packing house, and in the right-hand upper corner is an inset of Libby or Cudahy, or someone, with cardinal colored whiskers. You see for yourself how notions would mix, and how the old man had his theory, according to which, the herd of beeves was a sacrifice to Libby deified . . . After all, there are all kinds of like things scattered about the world and each has its authentic history. I've seen an old teapot in a Honduras temple and a

carved calabash in a polite drawing-room in St. Louis and the owner of each had a tale to tell of his rubbish. Woven theories."

"It seems to me," said McNabb, whose eyes bright as those of a bird seemed to be peering for an opening, "that man everywhere has some dim apprehension of a great, calm law" (he used the adjectives with peculiar unction), "stretching above all these blatant forces about him. He is impressed by a sense of some external purpose working on in the great deeps of the universe. Looking at gods and idols, and I believe and hope I take no conventional view, the shining thread of a truth runs through them all and strings them together. To be sure, the human effort sometimes gets a something visible that is almost grotesque as in the case—"

"You are spinning words, McNabb," interrupted Nelson.

McNabb made a protesting motion with his arm and upset and broke his glass.

"You've got the wrong end of the stick. . . You've got the wrong end of the stick," said Nelson. "You are grafting your notions on things and building a theory. Things work out like this. A savage finds a root that has a faint resemblance to a human head, we'll say. He does just what you might: whittles, trims, shapes it, because to do so amuses him. When his imagination has run its course, someone else improves on it, perhaps adds cocoanut fibre to give it the idea of human hair, or adds a gash here and there for humor. But human imagination is still busy. There is the man of words to come. He



weaves a tale about the carving. The tale is told and retold. Variations creep in. The tale becomes a legend and the legend a myth; the myth in turn, the base for a religious belief perhaps. We, in turn, build theories and—"

"That's well enough," began McNabb. "Still—"

"And so on," continued Nelson. "Just a foolish, irresponsible saying of things; playing on words."

But McNabb was persistent. He leaned forward and fixed Nelson with threatening forefinger. "Consider the persistence of the belief of races in a life beyond death as recorded everywhere. In Anthropology and historical criticism—"

"You must be interrupted, McNabb," said Nelson. "You'd run this into an argument that gets us nowhere. I'm going to tell you something at first hand. At first hand, mind. Listen." He slapped the back of his neck vigorously and caught his mosquito and I had the notion that he wished he could dispose of McNabb in the same way.

"That belief in a future life so wide spread, does not prevent an ardent desire to avoid the speculative bliss, does it? And don't run away with your 'generally accepted views.' It's not so. Mind you, that whittled rot we spoke of might in time get a place in a temple. Admitted. But, would the priests believe the tales they told? Would they? There's their familiarity with it you know. They see the thing daily, touch it, knock it over by chance and all that. The fellows who cleaned the temple, too, and did the dirty work. Would they? They'd experiment, and you know what would be the result of all

that independent verification. Disbelief. Utter disbelief! I know how it was when as a boy I said the Lord's prayer backwards to raise the devil. I tried everything. Even built a little altar and sacrificed a chicken to see what'd happen. I felt better when there was nothing doing. Had solid ground beneath my feet."

Nelson paused to drink, then refilled McNabb's glass. He took it a little sulkily I thought. "Seems to me," he went on, "a god would have to have very human characteristics to command any universal respect. I'll tell you a case. A case of a tribe with a satisfactory god."

"I'd been in Cordoba at the time I speak of, doing some work for the Whittetts in the *lignum vitae* wood line. Learning of gold in La Serena, I set off with a mule pack outfit intending to strike San Juan. But I missed it; struck too far north up the Quevada; had hard luck. The mule died on me. There was an ecstasy of color there and the clean smell of a world unspoiled, and it wasn't what you'd call bad traveling, for there was plenty of water, and where there's water, anyone can live."

"Presently I met a fellow, a decent chap and quiet, like most unspoiled savages, and we had little trouble in understanding one another for we only dealt in fundamentals. When there's no interest in gossip and no theories, there's little talk necessary. And, too, there's a large admixture of Spanish in all those Indian tongues. He knew I was astray and flung out the statement that his village was near after I had spread out my hands by way of explaining my long trip. He seemed to take a

kind of pride in the beauty of the place, just as a decent civilized man would, plucking a strange flower now and then or pointing to a bird, for man's man, whatever his color.

"His people accepted me, hustled about and fed me, and were as curious to know what I had to tell as a crowd at a village barber shop right here is. My discoverer presently showed me off to his neighbors and we went here and there, the children flocking curiously. Imagine yourself entering a country place. It was like that. But in time we came to the temple, which was a structure made of small tree trunks and a kind of bamboo, roofed in with branches and leaves and hung over the low doorway. There was a certain amount of explanation before we entered and one old fellow nerved himself to intervene. He seemed to be objecting to my entering but he was verbally overcome, one youngish girl railing loudly. She had a name that sounded like 'Kitty' though it wasn't that, and she seemed to be a regular Katherine. 'Taming of the Shrew', you know. In the confusion, I lost track of what was going on and found myself in a sweat, being suspicious of trouble in religious centers.

"It was greenishly cool in there and what I saw, startled me. It was the god. For a moment I thought it was some waxen stuff, so natural it seemed. It came to me with a shock that the people were given to playing tricks, perhaps like the Dyaks of Borneo, you know, who make a wax figure of some enemy and leave it to melt away in the hope that the body of the original will waste. This thing lay on its side with closed eyes and was on a couch made of brush

covered with a silky stuff of gossamer delicacy that grew thereabouts. But the face of the thing! It sent the shivers up my spine. Black as the ace of spades it was and two great tusks where the canines should have been. But to beat it all, on the head of it were indubitable horns. Horns, sir!"

"Clearly, demon worshippers," put in McNabb eagerly.

"Don't tag and ticket things" said Nelson. "This thing was alive and breathing like a man asleep and that made it more horrible to look at. I had flashed memories of things read. Of Greek satyrs, German forest sprites, Fentris, the devil even. . . The beast gave a yawn, stretched, sat upright and I saw the hairy chest of a man naked to the waist. A horned ourang-outang it seemed. Then the thing saw me, became suddenly rigid, rolled its heavy lidded eyes, and sat staring as if about to leap; as if crouched to leap. The look it gave me was as fierce and ugly as face could wear. Honest to God, it was the most repulsive-looking creature man could imagine; very powerfully built; somewhat paunchy, and its legs were those of a man. Let me tell you, I lost my composure and got outside as quickly as I could without giving intimation to the attendants that I was the least bit scared. They, I saw, stood with heads bent, hands held at chest level, side by side, thumbs touching, palms turned downwards. I glanced at the Thing as I passed out and saw it eyeing me sidelong, head half turned just as you may have seen a startled horse look at you.

"Let me tell you that that night I did little sleeping, but was so played

out with all the walking I'd done, that I couldn't plan leaving the place. I guess I made a pretty fair face of it though and managed to look calm and take it all as a matter of course while the people looked on. Mind you, there was plenty of talking and whispering. 'Kitty' too came to my bed side and chattered away volubly. But I had nightmares and saw the creature in a frenzy of hysteria or laughing in fiendish glee. Figure it out for yourself.

"Next day passed pleasantly, for the god had gone for a walk in the forest, but when the evening cool set in and the white mists crept up the long, narrow valley, there was a great to-do, announcing the god's return. Later, for half an hour, things were muddled, for the man who found me, together with 'Kitty', set to work to tell me something and I judged it was an invitation to leave. I showed them my blistered feet and that seemed to arouse proper sympathy. Then there were genuflections and signs and hand motions with intimations to me to follow suit. A funny business altogether and I could make little of it. Anyway, after a while, I understood that I was being prepared for a visit to the god and, after some expostulation, I went. There was no way out.

"The upper end of the valley ended in a kind of a cul-de-sac and there was a cave there at the foot of a fairly steep slope. It was very dark at first compared with the evening glow of the sunset in the lower valley, but very gratefully cool and soothing. A mass of greenery made glorious by crimson bloom, covered the opening and a fellow with a spear was on guard, so that

the whole had a theatrical appearance. The guard made a sign or two, joined us, and we three went in together. It was quite a little time before I saw the god clearly. He was seated on a knob of rock at the further end. But my companion said something mumbly and the god nodded. By then, my eyes were sufficiently accustomed to the gloom of the place and I saw his face plainly. The sheer ugliness of it sent a shudder through me and before I was well aware of what was afoot, my two companions had made their hand motions and slipped out.

"Certainly scared, I backed to the cave wall where I saw a good-sized rock like a flattened, truncated cone that might serve as an unhandy club. Not a sound of course except the early night birds outside, heard faintly, and the noise they made seemed to hearten. So for a while, we stood silent, unmoving. Then a queer thing happened. The creature rose to his feet and fell to making motions, raising his arms high above his head, then dropping them. The motion was automatic yet not mechanical, jerky but not angular and the series of gestures were complicated and almost graceful and it was queer to see the Thing come to a position of rest with a certain smartness. The attitude was one of dignity. Its expression seemed to soften. Then:

"'Don' you all recog'nize it boss?' boomed the Thing. 'Don' you all know it?'

"At that my head went up and my body straightened with a jerk, though there was still a vague uneasiness about me. But the horror became something else as I saw the grotesqueness of the creat-



ure, but still there was a lurking notion in me that it was all an illusion. Too, the Thing was grinning, though, as it seemed in that twilight, quite nervously.

"I pulled myself together. It was an effort though. But there was the thing still grinning, and, as it made what seemed to be a propitiatory motion, I heard in a deep, booming bass, "I allus done unnerstood the ritchool was the same." And the god was bowing, mind you. Little jerky half bows with a motion of the right hand to its head like an abbreviated salute. At that a memory of a Pullman sleeper came before me. Said I, 'Go on—go on,' then added, at a hazard, 'George. Go on George.'

"From the Thing came an unmistakable chuckle, and 'Suah good that sounds boss' said the god with evident delight. And he became voluble. "Suah good boss. I been gone done seen yore charm right away,' he said, pointing to my watch chain, and then things rushed together and fitted with a click. The contortions and signs, the outer and inner guard, the oddly recurring words which I recognized as distorted passwords. At that, my mind went actively to work to recover that white man's supremacy which I had temporarily surrendered to fear.

## II.

"In spite of my pants, which were too irregularly slashed for comfort, and certainly for decency, I assumed some dignity in my port as I walked down the village with George the god a little in the rear. It may seem silly too, but I confess that there was a moment of pride when I noticed that I was pointed to with new respect.

"Already the silver points of the first

stars were seen before we reached the woods into which we went some three hundred yards deep. We came to a pool, or rather the widening of a brook which seemed like a diamond in a dusky immensity, and, as we sat facing one another across the little water, I remember looking into the pool as in a mirror and seeing the inverted form of the horned man. I seemed to be looking down at some Pan instead of a perfectly mild-mannered god of unknown antecedents.

"Of course I should have got more of his story than I did, but there was that confounded prejudice—color line and all that, and, while he gave me the high lights of his career, he tangled things in the telling most absurdly. Much was inconsequent, irrelevant, but I gathered that he had been guilty of some peccadillo and, when he had first seen me, a white man, feared the long arm of the law.

"His lodge work he had come by honestly in some Arkansas town and I suspect that his dignified manner was the result of his having been a head waiter or something of the kind. For etiquette, it's hard to beat anyone in that profession. Mind you, I'd noticed that my savage friends all used a cotton napkin at meal time. It struck me then as odd.

"However, I gathered that George had got into some trouble in New Orleans, and, to escape the consequences had shipped to South America under the impression that he was en route for Liberia. Landing in Pernambuco, he was astonished beyond measure to find that men of his own color were unintelligible to him, so he had had



trouble. Wandered to Paauihy and tramped to Bahia—tough times, no doubt. But at Bahia he was hailed in his own tongue.

"It was, George said, a Doctor Mayfield, formerly of Chicago, and more particularly of Monadnock Building. Broke, of course. Like so many, he had supposed that all in Latin America were ignorant fools waiting to be exploited. Still, he had a resourceful mind, and, seeing George, had enlisted him as his aide. This is what he did presently. With a base of silver made by hammering out Brazilian dollars, he had made a curved plate which he inserted by what must have been a neat operation, under the negro's scalp where it fitted the contour of the skull very well. Into it he had bored a couple of screw-holes. I examined the fellow's scalp and no one could have told that there was anything foreign there save by the touch. Not a sign of suture. Into the base of a pair of goat horns he had then fixed screws and when the horns were set into place and the hair had gathered about the base, the job came near defying detection. Also, Mayfield had cut off and capped the fellow's canines and so fitted him with a prepared pair of boar's tusks which looked horrible enough, the Lord only knows. That Chicago man was certainly a foresighted fellow and it is a pity that Fate drove him to such straits.

"The experiment was a winner, and when George was in a steel cage and put on exhibit at half a dollar a head, they grew rich—too rich perhaps, for the news went far and wide and there was some rumor of a scientific investigation. So they fled by night and pres-

ently came to Arenas Blanco. There they could not stand the mixing of drinks, and George seems to have sampled in too rapid succession, whiskey, gin, pisco, vermouth and native wines. There was a scuffle and the local police had grabbed George by the horns bending the screw in such wise that it was impossible for him to dehorn himself any more. He became separated from his dentist too.

"George was very hazy in the rest of his tale, but I put two and two together and imagined him wandering about in the jungle until he was found, much as I was, a very hungry, meek and gentle wild man. But theories are as readily constructed by savage as by white men, and deification once commenced, went on swimmingly.

"His first notion, when they brought him fruit and other eatables and established him in the temple, was that they were anthropophagi and intended to fatten him, for he, too, was theory-making. But, learning the facts of the case, he lived up to his reputation. His knowledge of secret society work stood him in good stead and he grafted some of the ritual on to the crude forms of worship very effectively. That kind of thing would, of course, appeal to a simple folk. Still, he was a good deity all right and interjected a kind of human justice into such things as he had to deal with, and his people never seemed to doubt him for the simple reason that his notions of right and of wrong coincided with theirs. No labored explanation of things was necessary in an effort to make seeming incongruities fit. There were a few who acted as servitors, priests as it were, and, natu-

rally, they could not doubt but that they had a living god. So his was the *ipse dixit*, and, on the strength of his horns and tusks he delivered the law and the ten commandments, added a few by way of bringing the mosaic law up to date, and there was no questioning his decisions. Taking him all in all, he did very well as a god and seeing him at work later, I had to admit that there was an air of quiet mystery about him that was charming. A highly satisfactory god, in fact."

"But the promulgation of Truth," interjected McNabb. "What of that? It was in your power to—"

Nelson shrugged his shoulders and said "Pish". Then, after lighting his pipe, he busied himself opening a bottle or two. The end of his story was punctuated as it were by "Tank yous" and "Here's luck," as he stepped from man to man offering the beer.

"Let me tell you that I know of one

or two of the tribe who set of fervent eyes to gain new converts (Take a last glass.) Weighed in of human happiness, everything satisfactory and I would not have a word to upset the thing for work (Another bottle won't hurt). If was a way to do it, I'd send G down an Edison and a few records he had rigged up a kind of a rough and did fairly well. . . (We'll not let this much longer. Make the most of There was plenty of jollity in the worship."

McNabb then rose to his feet and said something about "fullest development and efficient social organization," but just at that moment there was a general movement to leave, so it was lost in the hand-shakings and farewells.

As I bade him "Good night" he was saying to McNabb, "but don't worry yourself. They'll be all the better men because there are no puritanical prohibitions."

## The Cynic Shamed

BY MARX G. SABEL

Two bluejays and a mockingbird

Alighted upon a fence,  
And looked about, as if to say,  
"Isn't life immense?"

A pompous toad hopped straight in front  
Of me, and squatted down  
To sun himself, as lazily  
As any bum in town.

For years my friends have tried in vain  
With many angry words  
To shame me, but it took a frog  
And three indifferent birds!

# Edgar Lee Masters: An Interview

BY WALTER YUST

"MY friend," said Thackeray once, "two different universes walk about under your hat and under mine." And, when I confess that I have learned chiefly from his brilliant and grim "Spoon River Anthology" what little I know of the particular universe that walks around under Edgar Lee Masters' felt hat, I am only admitting those limitations of universes in general which must preclude the possibility of any one of them actually knowing even itself. As for Mr. Masters' more recent books, they have revealed to me nothing so poignantly as this—

"That where so much is said  
One half will never be believed  
The other never read."

But if "Spoon River" itself afforded merely a glimpse of the universe walking around under Mr. Masters' hat, at least its chronicles of disillusionment, wasted love, frustrated dreams did lead me to picture a Mr. Masters in the character of an old, morose, German physician of our neighborhood.

This physician, a fat, yellow-skinned man, had no practice, conversed with no one, but spent hours in his dusty, feebly-lighted office. Long after the days when I was wont, with neighborhood youngsters, to scurry away at this man's approach, a newspaper sent me to interview him. The small, dirty room was literally packed with broken-backed and mouldy medical books; newspapers

and clippings, most of them faded with age, lay on the torn carpet of the floor. The desk was buried under volumes and periodicals. The air was hot and thick. On the windowsill, with one limp leg hanging over it, lay a battered doll in a gay dress. When the doctor, whose vest was stained with the spilt of many eatings, looked up from his writing, his pin-point eyes burned over smeared, rusty-rimmed glasses.

"I am too busy," he grunted impatiently. "Writing a book about the strange and horrible diseases of mankind." And he pulled out his words slowly, as if the magnitude of the work impressed him too . . .

Whether there was sufficient reason for it or not, as I stood in the elevator mounting to Mr. Masters' fifth-floor law office, Dearborn street, Chicago, memory, annoyingly inopportune, of the sinister old doctor filled my mind. I had a presentiment of an evil half hour, which the grinning, "Mr. Masters? Sure, I know him. He's one of them lawyers I take up and down every day," of the elevator man did not dispel; nor the cordial invitation to "go right in!" of the typist; nor the friendly approach in the outer office of a colleague of Mr. Masters with "Say! Got a match about you?"

After I had waited ten minutes, Mr. Masters, ever so much like Thackeray with his round face and halo of dusty hair, beckoned me into his private office. And soon, in shirt sleeves rolled

up to his elbows, in checkered trousers and vest, and smoking a curved pipe, he was leaning back in his swivel chair. Then, without a smile, he looked me carefully over.

Mr. Masters' office, rather spacious, had the cheerless atmosphere, not of my old physician's—it was too spacious—but of Dr. Grimshawe's out of Hawthorne's novel. At least, it was Dr. Grimshawe who stalked around in the back of my mind as I sat in the law office of this man of dark poems. The floor was carpeted with one or two old rugs; a black safe, doors open, stuffed with files, papers and books, stood over in the corner. Along the wall ranged shelves of drab legal tomes. Typed letters, and a long single row of thumb-nail books, Sandburg's "Cornhuskers" to Chinese history, gave character to the top of Mr. Masters' flat desk.

Mr. Masters is a strongly-built brown-faced man with milk-white forearms. A striking contrast. His sharp lips seem ever trembling to unflesh the teeth. His eyes have the look about them of a child who has been caught doing something he shouldn't.

While I sat there before him, for one slow moment I had a disquieting sensation that Mr. Masters' searching eyes had quite penetrated my universe and were gathering their fill.

"Behind my poems what is the urge?" he repeated, the blue smoke of his pipe curling about his face and upward. "A desire to tell the truth! Truth, that's all! I don't write for the improvement of people. You can't improve people! They are like cabbage heads! No matter how much you may try to improve

cabbage heads, they still remain cabbage!"

Turn the pages of the "Anthology" and they leave you with a sense of horror. Here and there, but only rarely, do you catch the simple beauty which the old Greek poets could put into such an epitaph as, for instance,

Mariner, ask not whose tomb I am here  
but be thine own fortune a kinder  
sea.

or,

Looking on the monument of a dead  
boy, Cleotes son of Menesaechmus,  
pity him who was so beautiful and  
died.

Mr. Masters' search for truth seems to have driven him to hunt the "strange and horrible diseases of mankind." That, of course, is a matter of his own universe and not of ours. But his seeming insistence, in not only "Spoon River," but in his later books, that the diseases are the truth, and, if not the whole truth, then the greater part of it, has driven him unconsciously to defend his truth, apparently to like his truth. Many persons don't like it. They prefer to believe there are other truths, whether there are or not. Perhaps, like Tolstoi, they believe that repulsive truth ought to be written about, even in poetry; but also, at moments, like Tolstoi, they'd somehow rather it wouldn't be. And, like Pontius Pilate, perhaps, they ask a question. And the question is a soft cushion at the end of a thumping fall. They ask, "What is truth anyway?" And when such men as William James answer, whatever truth is, "we have to live to-day by what truth we can get to-day, and be ready to-



morrow to call it falsehood"—they can the more easily agree that Mr. Masters' truth is scarcely the truth after all; and that, since he wants to write the truth, and since what he thinks is the truth really isn't, he shouldn't write it. It takes some of the sting out of life to reason, right or wrong, that way. It contributes a measure of happiness to many, who are quite willing to remain blind, in this generation,—which Mr. Masters sees, letting down its bucket for the water of life,

" . . . thirsting, spurred by hope,  
Kneel upon aching knees,  
And with . . . eager hands draw  
up the bucketless rope."

Mr. Masters discussed literary traditionalists, who have been charging him with morbidity, a bitter outlook, a pre-occupation with sex and suicide, crude technic and whatnot.

"I never read the critics," he observed with some heat. "I never pay any attention to them. They are a nuisance. They can't do what the poet is trying to do, so they talk about the poet. The poet is an oak which brings forth leaves. The leaves are the poems. The caterpillars on the oak are the critics. And they chew up the leaves, theorizing as to how the oak made them and whether they taste good or not. I don't bother my head about critics. Academic discussions of works of art have little point."

Mr. Masters laid down his pipe and pulled his chair over to the window. He continued to look out of the window while he talked.

"I understand from what I am told that certain critics explain into my verse

all sorts of theories about its composition. In the first place, only the 'Anthology' and a comparatively few other poems of mine are in free verse. I have been writing mostly in rime and meter. In the second place, the lines of my free verse are written with no especial conscious effort as to form. I let the idea and the emotion carry the rhythm.

"When an idea for a poem comes to me I jot it down on a piece of paper. Then I think over that idea; I think about it a whole lot, anywhere and wherever I happen to be. After this period of gestation, I am ready to put to paper a complete poem. I rarely have to make any changes. I suppose that is why I am able to write such a volume of verse. My poems are all carefully thought out before I transcribe them. Consequently, the mere copying down comes easily and quickly. And I never use a typewriter."

Before the appearance of "Spoon River," Mr. Masters had published an occasional small volume of rimed verses. These books did not excite public attention. According to Mr. Masters, it was the late William Marion Reedy, editor of "Reedy's Mirror," who urged him to read the Greek Anthology, that collection of brief, sharply executed, epitaphs, some harshly satirical, some humorous, some tender and of unusual beauty. "It was from contemplation of its epitaphs," writes Mr. Masters in the dedication of his "Toward the Gulf," "that my hand unconsciously strayed to the sketches of 'Hod Putt,' 'Serepta The Scold', and other pieces in 'Spoon River', and in 1915 the collection began its most extraordinary career."

Mr. Masters is not prepared to admit that his poems before "Spoon River" show any inferior quality.

"I wrote them while I was working night and day at the law. I published them at my own expense and, of course, they didn't get the proper advertising. And also, people weren't so interested in poetry those days." He published one of these books as early as 1898.

"Spoon River came when people were interested in verse. It was widely advertised; many of the poems in it had been going the rounds of the country before the book appeared. It was written in a form most readers could understand and they recognized in it—life! Keat's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' is beautiful in its way. But readers have to have an intellectual background to appreciate it. People can read and enjoy 'Spoon River' without any of that. Why, look at the numbers of editions it's gone through! And its popularity began right after it was issued. All great masterpieces have immediate popularity."

I asked Mr. Masters to tell me the secret of great masterpieces, and I mentioned that Professor Erskine had written somewhere that poetry is "an invariable function of life, and that if you kill every horse in the world, you destroy the species. But kill off every known and suspected poet, and there will be as many as ever after a generation or two."

"Brains!" replied Mr. Masters. "It takes brains to make a poet!"

It was Plato, you remember, who said that God in his wisdom "took away the minds of poets"; and Macaulay who declared "that in proportion as men

know more and think more . . . they . . . make better theories and worse poems; and the much quoted Theseus in "Midsummernight's Dream" who would have it that

"The lunatic, the lover and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact."

And finally, downright Thomas Love Peacock, who, whether with tongue in his cheek or not, irritated Shelley into writing his "Defense of Poetry" called the poet "a semi-barbarian in a civilized community."

"Brains!" Mr. Masters repeated in his low scratchy voice. "There are a lot of young persons who are writing nowadays. It isn't unrest nor the times bringing them out. They are always here. They live for a while and are forgotten. They are like young lawyers; no different. About 6000 lawyers practice in Chicago; at every state examination a couple hundred more become lawyers. Some of them are successful; some are not. Here and there, one of them stands out, big, powerful.

"Poets are just like lawyers in this respect. Every year the number grows. Most of them are indifferent poets. Here and there a man or a woman stands head and shoulders above the rest—an artist to be reckoned with. Because he or she has brains! Brains! They are born with them. Take Goethe, for instance. He had the brains. If he had been interested in the law, and not in poetry, he would have been as great a lawyer as he was a poet. Because he had the brains to start with.

"Of course, brains signify also experience, a knowledge of oneself, a knowledge of life. This thing we call civilization in just the sum-up of what has

been learned by those who have lived before us. The sum-up of what we get out of that and what we in our own lives have lived adds to the power of the brains.

"I never read these passing poets, who die like the grass—oh, once in a while maybe. I don't do much reading at all. I'm quite busy enough with my own writing and thinking. And I find, too, that the reading of works by other writers confuses my own thinking. But I read all the latest books on biological and philosophical subjects."

With some hesitation, I suggested that one criticism of his poems, particularly those published since "Spoon River," has been that they indicate that Mr. Masters has put on the "mantle of a pedagogic prophet" and that a "jumbled scientific learning sits heavily on the poet" in him, and I asked him whether he was interested in scientific books because of the material he could find in them for poems.

"No!" he said. "I read them because I am interested in them. I read other

books"—he mentioned one of Gilbert Murray's on Greek literature he had just finished—"when I am travelling.

"But I never read novelists under any circumstances," he added, and the statement was arresting, because I, somehow, have had the suspicion that Mr. Masters is essentially the novelist, who could write "Mitch Millers" or "Mac-Teagues" or "Jude the Obscures" if he wanted to. I have long suspected that thousands of readers—novel-readers—who had never before and have never since read another volume of poetry, found in "Spoon River" a justly amazing and absorbing story book.

My good old doctor and his "strange and horrible diseases of mankind" still stick in my mind—even after meeting Mr. Masters. It requires a passionate sense of necessity, it would seem to me, to gather together the material and to write such a work; it requires a passionate faith in the ultimate beauty of life . . . And I have often wondered why that little battered doll with the gay dress lay on the dirty windowsill. . .

## Idle Afternoon

BY WILLIAM SAPHIER

I watched two little waves  
marching to the shore.  
One died with a yawn  
the second with a roar.



# The Reticence of Caravan

BY THOMAS KENNEDY

## I.

IN view of the high fever of expectancy which had consumed him, it was, perhaps, inevitable that Michael Caravan should experience a cold reaction of disappointment.

The Central Club building had not shaken his confidence; its quietly perfect exterior and the unpretentious richness within were quite in harmony with what he had been led to expect, and it was only at the threshold of the lecture hall that a glacial breath, rushing out from the audience composed of members, sickened him with a prevision of catastrophe.

In a moment, the tactfully condescending chairman had maneuvered a way to the raised platform. A polite scattering of applause, well intentioned, vaguely complimentary, greeted the writer's appearance. A moment later as he seated himself at the carved writing desk, the introductory address reached him in blurred fragments.

"Promising young poet" . . . "intellectual treat" . . . "native of our city" . . . The room was intolerably close; fetid with mingled perfumes. A pathetic determination to be uplifted and thrilled, not to be bored, was written on the faces before him. This was the glorious opportunity he had been led to expect; these were the intellectual minority who were awaiting the advent of a messiah to lead them back to the ways of Beauty!

The room itself was a striking testimony to some person's good taste. Whose? Caravan wondered, searching the visages of his audience. He saw wealth, a certain culture, a surface prettiness; that was all. A cruel light dazzled him as he perceived the truth. These animals with money had paid someone else to give their room a loveliness which, though its presence flattered them, they were equally incapable of creating or appreciating. He himself, although the bars were invisible, was no more to them than a lion in a cage.

When the young man had finished reading, the applause was emphatic; almost too sincere, as though it marked the completion of an ordeal. As the assembly disintegrated, the chairman exhibited the lion to various members. They spoke inanities and were suitably answered. Said one artless matron, carried away by her desire to please: "it is such a treat to have a poet for a change; at our last meeting we were entertained by a prestidigitator."

To this remark, Michael Caravan could find no fitting answer.

## II.

By habit rather than intention, he turned into the rare book shop. Michael Caravan had walked miles since his escape from the overfed, overdressed monstrosities of the Central Club. The disappointment and shame gnawing at his sensitive soul, had at length produced a



sort of anesthesia, under which a numbed spirit could no longer feel any sharp twinge of pain. He still knew that his dream had been punctured, that an appreciative audience in this materialistic age had been a fool's illusion; but he knew it almost indifferently, and when the haven of old books presented its inviting dusk, he had thought it would be heavenly to rest in that cavern, and to feel the comfort and companionship of dear, dead writers who had also suffered, and who would understand.

Hartnett, the proprietor of the shop, hid behind an exterior perfectly expressed in the word "imposing," a great discernment. He knew that the presence of writers, even unknowns or men of no particular importance, gave his establishment that indefinable something called atmosphere; consequently Caravan and his sort were encouraged to browse among the shelves, to talk quietly together in corners of the dim, cool interior, where they were secretly pointed out to wealthy clients who saw them as picturesque silhouettes against the rich background of many-colored bindings. Sometimes these impecunious men of letters were offered coveted books at astonishing reductions in price, and accepted with almost tearful gratitude. Though the bookseller charged these gratuities to his advertising account, a great compassion mingled with his cynicism. Once he too had dreamed his dreams. He regarded these young visionaries with something like affection, and was glad to give them sanctuary.

Michael Caravan, entering this refuge, was arrested by a strident, singing chant:

"Little known letters of Kelmway now for the first time offered at public sale four pages foolscap size all in the handwriting of the author perfect condition what'm I offered."

This speech, delivered entirely without pause or expression, by a puffy-faced, fishy-eyed man whose body seemed to have sagged to fit the lines of his baggy suit, was addressed to a gathering which half filled the long, low room. For one horrified instant, Caravan believed he had entered the wrong door. Then he remembered. Hartnett had recently taken to conducting highly profitable auctions of literary relics. The seedy man was the auctioneer, and the gloating throng who pawed eagerly over the pages written by the great dead man, these were collectors.

It occurred to Michael Caravan that Kelmway had been much like himself; patronized or ignored during most of his life, unable to find a publisher, a flat, absolute failure until old age and privation had annealed his heart, made success or failure matters of indifference. It was only after his death that the public had awakened to his bigness. Then the publishers had harvested a fortune; and now these greedy gatherers of rareties, many of them with no conception of the significance of the things over which they haggled, were offering money, one hundred, two hundred, one thousand dollars—he followed the bids—for a confidential utterance of that great broken heart. In a clairvoyant second, Michael Caravan's own life and death passed before his eyes. He saw his own letters . . . Horrible! It was not to be endured. There must be a way of cheating fate. All at once he knew

what had been crystallizing in his brain, and breaking from the shop, he ran toward the room which he called home.

### III.

. . . "And so, my dear Howard, I feel that whatever others may say, you will understand. That, after all, is the only thing which has troubled me. The rest of the world? Even if they could understand, they would not care."

The poet finished reading this last paragraph of the long letter he had been writing, and nodded his approval. He wrote, "Michael Caravan" with a flourish of bravado, threw down the pen, and picked up the glass of colorless liquid which stood before him. He would feel no pain. There might be a slight nausea; then would come drowsiness; then . . . Glancing about the room, he made sure that nothing had been overlooked. Not a page remained of all the manuscripts he had loved, perhaps, too well. In the fireplace, tiny red sparks raced through the brittle fragments of pages which were falling swiftly into impalpable, gray dust.

Caravan proposed a toast: "To Death! may she be more kind than Life." He drank deeply, and following an archaic custom, shattered the glass on the floor. As he waited, his mind went skipping back over many of the lines he had written, and paused on one:

"Merciful sleep, forevermore to dim —"

A shocking thought broke suddenly upon his reverie. Howard had a copy of every line he had written. In his haste to be away, he had forgotten. Fighting back a desire for sleep, he picked up the pen. It was heavy . . . his hand was weighted as with lead.

Summoning all the will which remained, he forced his arm up, up, miles upon endless miles until the pen touched the ink. His hand dropped, but the effort had been sufficient.

"Howard," he scrawled at the end of his letter, "as you love me, destroy every line—"

Sleep rolled over him in a great, quieting flood.

### IV.

"The Collected Poems of Michael Caravan" was the literary success of the year. Tawdry best sellers aside, no single work brought such gratifying returns; and the publishers who snatched this choice tidbit from Howard Lorton, the poet's literary executor, justly congratulated themselves on immense business acumen. Not the smallest factor in the success of the volume, was the poignant personal letter printed as a preface. Many were the tears shed by sentimental readers over this outpouring of his soul, in which the author explained to his one friend, the motives which caused him to end his own life.

# The Tropic Screen

BY ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

The Western sky is flushed with rose  
After the silver summer rains,  
And whirring through the sunset goes  
A sudden swooping flight of cranes.

About the time when shadows fall,  
I made my hungering soul a feast—  
And set against my barren wall  
A little window to the East.

The sober place forgot its gloom;  
I see, as one that newly sees,  
The pallid paper of the room  
Is coloured like young almond trees.

And what are these that fade and flow,  
These wings that shimmer from the wall—?  
The tram-bells in the street below  
Are like a far-off temple's call.

And there's a glimmer in the dusk,  
A hint of silver and of rose,  
A scent of almonds in the husk—  
The grey wings of the flamingoes.

This is my window to the East,  
That opens only to my soul:  
I made it for a little feast  
Beside the winter fire of coal.

Its Western sky is flushed with rose  
After the silver summer rains,  
And whirring through the sunset goes  
A sudden swooping flight of cranes.

## Little Ironies of Literary Life

BY BURTON RASCOE

## 1

**P**AUL MARIE Verlaine was perhaps the greatest lyrical apparition in French literature of the century which produced Hugo and Lamartine, Gautier and Musset, Baudelaire and Rimbaud, Jules Laforgue and Tristan Corbière, Stéphane Mallarmé and José María de Heredia. As a music maker he was of the company of Villon and Herckel, of Heine and Edgar Poe. François Coppé has said of him that he created "a poetry peculiarly individual, an inspired poetry which is at once native and subtle, full of nuances, evoking the most delicate vibrations of the nervous, the most fugitive echoes of the heart: a natural poetry, moreover, indeed, almost popular; a poetry where rhythm, both free and broken, preserves a delicious harmony, where trophies twirl and sing like a nursery ronde, whose the verse which remains verse and among the most exquisite is at once musical. And in that immutable poetry he has given us all his fervor, all his faith, all his remorse, all his tenderness, all his divorce and has revealed to us a man so troubled and yet so serene that."

[illegible]

1. The first group of people who are interested in the study of the history of the world are those who are interested in the past. They want to know what happened in the past and why it happened. They are interested in the events that shaped the world as we know it today.

from low dram shop to confessional, from prison to bagnio, from alley-ways to charity hospitals we know and the knowledge was common property to all literary Paris of his time. Anatole France once described him thus: *C'est un vieux vagabond, fatigué d'avoir erré trente ans sur tous les chemins. . . . Il surprend, il choque le regard. Il a l'air à la fois farouche et câlin, sauvage et familier. Un Socrate instinctif, ou mieux, un faune, un satyre, un être à demi brute, à demi dieu, qui effraye comme une force naturelle qui n'est soumise à aucune loi connue. . . . Et l'érudite ressemble à Villon; ce sont deux mauvais garçons à qui il fut donné de dire les plus douces choses du monde.*

One day, toward the end of his hurried life, this old vagabond, plagued by an inconceivable vanity, took it into his head to announce his candidacy for that ornate and ribald sepulchre of mediocre talents, the French Academy. It signified the one thing which was denied him above all—and which he had no need of—respectability. This greatly annoyed gathering, scattered in everything its petty considerations and wanting the energy of solid achievements, in which the candidate had so far shown none, were at once a triumph if the candidate's existence as artist or writer had been merely a name; a few exalted writers besides it was all over. "Monsieur Chénier," murmured the members of the Académie Française, "has been dead for some time."



passant, Goncourt, and Zola. And yet this old vagabond who had penned the loveliest songs of his generation, nursed the hope that he might enjoy the Academy's dubious benisons, live in better comfort (and with more ample wine) on its meagre pension, and end his days crowned an "immortal" by correct and orthodox rhetoricians, a sterile and emasculate body of well-meaning mutual back-scratchers.

His past, he knew, barred him. He was the "empire at the end of the decadence"; but he inhabited a greasy garret. He had refreshed and enriched French poetry with strange, intimate, ingenious and ingenuous verbal harmonies; but he was often outlandishly drunk. He was the idol and master to a group of talented poets; but he had been imprisoned at Mons. France had produced but one poet who was his lyrical equal; but he had abandoned his wife for a none too savory London adventure with Arthur Rimbaud. . . . Even the thought of Verlaine's occupying an armchair in the Academy would have horrified the prim grammarians and concoctors of pot-boilers who formed that areopagus of arid minds. His child-like habit of pulling up a frayed and dirty trouser to show the interesting coloring of his ulcerated leg would have sent them screaming from the Mazarin Palace.

So we find Verlaine in pathetic humility patching with infinite care the soiled and threadbare legend which covered him that he might appear acceptable in the society of these men, not three of whom were worthy, artistically, of cleaning the grime from his shapeless shoes.

In the defense he wrote after he had filed the declaration of his candidacy with the perpetual secretary of the Academy, we read:

"Unhappily the idea came to Huysmans, in his curious book, *A Rebours*, to compare me, from a literary standpoint, with Villon. From that moment others began to improvise on the theme and, because I was poor and because in those days I had looked misery in the face, though *squarely* in the face, they presumed to speak of me as one whose troubles in life, whose early adventures, and even whose temperament was like that of our great poet of another century and to compare me to him. They dragged into their analogy everything, the jails, the hazy assassinations, even the nameless hovels, even the *grosse Margot*. . . . As to my poverty, it is not sordid; as to my domicile, it is not an almshouse, but a very modest chamber for which I pay dearly enough and regularly; as to the hovel. . . it turns out to be a very respectable, well-furnished hotel" . . .

And so forth, a great and gifted man abasing himself that he might appear the social equal of M. Crapaud, Member of the Academy.

Verlaine's candidacy was not considered.

## II

Jules Laforgue's sensitive brain functioned in a fashion unlike that of any other writer who has ever set thoughts to paper. His work has about it a supernal cleverness, a suave and sprightly cynicism, a clownesque and sophisticated disillusion. His verbal patterns

are bizarre and fantastic, luminous and colorful, opalescent and rich in strange but evocative combinations. And beneath this, or with it, are the commentaries and observations of a man who had apparently absorbed all the learning of his period, whose analyses were sure and startling, precise and clinical, who postulated a literary form for the future, whose aesthetic was impeccable—a serene and agile playboy thumbing his nose with exquisite grace at a stupid and astonished world.

Laforgue's work comprises three small volumes; the complete poems; the *Moralités Légendaires*; and a collection of notes and essays published posthumously,—a work which Remy de Gourmont described as "only the prelude of an oratorio achieved in silence," paying thereby a double compliment to Laforgue's magnificent promise of potentialities and to the infinite suggestiveness of what he had already written. . . . Laforgue died of phthisis at the age of twenty-seven.

On a copy of *l'Imitation de Notre-Dame la Lune*, presented to Paul Bourget who had become casually interested in him and had procured a place as reader to the Empress Augusta (grandmother to the ex-Kaiser) Lafogue wrote: "This is only an intermezzo. Be easy on it, I pray you, and wait for my next book." M. Bourget, thinking perhaps it was another volume of juvenilia by one of the young men who respected his opinion, or perhaps— . . . at all events threw this priceless treasure for bibliophiles among some old papers which later found their way to the stalls of the quay.

## III

Joris-Karl Huysmans, with two books, *A Rebours* and *Là-bas* performed the prodigious feat of ushering in, at a critical moment, a new and fascinating form of fiction (that of the *roman de la vie cérébrale*) and of starting an intellectual fashion. These books were the progenitors of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and of *Sixtine*, of *The Hill of Dreams* and of James Huneker's novel, *Painted Veils*; and they set the then young and impressionable George Moore to nursing his ennui's and writing of his pet (hypothetical) python and started the fad which resulted in the *Savoy* and the *Yellow Book* and paved the way for the cleansing mockery of *Les Déléguescences d'Adoré Floupette*.

Since Huysmans' imagination was limited, he did not invent: he merely saw and recorded. The model for Des Esseintes was Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fézensac, that quaint and delightful madman whose originality, Remy de Gourmont said, was excessively tattooed. The model for Durtal was Huysmans himself, and there was not a little of that leaning to the precious and *raffiné* of Des Esseintes in the punctilious clerk in the Ministry of the Interior. *A Rebours* and *Là-bas* were but the crystallization of a tendency that had been long in the air—a tendency in a state of culture which had produced Baudelaire and Rimbaud, Corbière and Mallarmé, Manet and Degas, Gauguin and Van Gogh. It was the tendency of the decadence, which is after all only the phenomenon of a civilization at its apex, a civilization blasé and fatigued, cere-

bral and short of wind. It is the goal of that plagued Sisyphus, humanity, which is eternally seeking leisure from its daily labors and finding only new monotonies.

Huysmans' aesthetic instincts were, for the special task of reflecting and representing his era and milieu, profound and selective; his *A Rebours* contains in graphic epitomes what remains today the most subtly apperceptive and sympathetic critiques on the fine arts of that fecund latter-half of the last century. His style was vibrant, sensitive, and personal, equal to any descriptive effort, arresting and savory with unique metaphors and apt but unexpected similes. Once this star had swept into their ken, those migratory impressionists, Symons, Ellis, Ransome, Wilde, Moore, and Huneker were ruined irreparably for larger but less scintillant luminaries nearer home. And the earlier works of Huysmans remain favorites among free minds.

On the personal side Huysmans was no less interesting. He was the most inveterate and complete hater, possibly, in all literature. He loathed or held in contempt his contemporaries almost without exception. His vocabulary of epithet was an unparalleled and flawless instrument for scarifying the unfortunate writers who fell short of his requirements. In a sarcastic, illuminating, and ludicrous phrase he rolled the pompous, the pretentious, the mediocre (and the unquestionably talented) into a little ball and flicked them away. . . . And his onomania was "betise"; it was the word most frequently upon his lips, which were ordinarily not guilty of repetition. With stupidity he fan-

cled himself ever at war. Had he had the notion that he was sent into this world with a mission, he would, no doubt, have said it was to lay stupidity low and knock imbecilities into a cocked hat. Few, except himself, were to his mind free from the taint. . . .

One evening Huysmans was at a dinner party to which Edouard Dubus, a critic and minor poet, had been invited. In the party also was Remy de Gourmont, who indeed, had been responsible for the meeting. Dubus had learned as a parlor accomplishment, much as another might take up elocution or slight-of-hand, various mediumistic tricks. Ventriloquism and a practiced big-toe, no doubt, were among his accessories. He was a sardonic and entertaining fellow who never gave himself away. At the party he was called upon to perform. He made a table move and cut capers common to seances. He evoked the spirits of various dead. At one point a summoned spirit announced that he was Camille de Sainte-Croix, the clever critic and novelist. (As a matter of fact Sainte-Croix was not dead). The disembodied ghost of a man who was still alive and well, answered numerous questions and, when he was interrogated as to his literary tastes, declared that he valued the work of Huysmans above that of all other men. Huysmans, who up to this time had regarded the proceedings with a half-incredulous mien, at once became profoundly interested. He called for more. The shades of various illustrious literary men attested to the supremacy of Huysmans in the world of letters. Huysmans' justly famous cat-like eyes became like saucers. He was insatiable. Poor



Dubus acquitted himself well, but in time grew weak and weary. His toes, no doubt, ached and his throat pained. He offered a *pièce de résistance*, the table dancing a jig, and turned on the lights.

The next day Remy de Gourmont called upon Huysmans. He found the author of *Là-bas* in a gravely preoccupied mood. No sooner had Gourmont entered the room than Huysmans said, in a voice of funereal dignity, "There can be no question that the table last night was moved by spirits. This fact demonstrates at once the immortality of the soul and the existence of God." Gourmont was so astonished he could not utter a word; and as Huysmans elaborated upon the circumstances, Gourmont sat petrified with incredulous amazement at Huysmans' being so completely taken in. Huysmans declared he had seen God in the dancing table, just as Moses had seen God in the burning bush. Gourmont left him without offering any objections.

A few days later Huysmans left Paris for a retreat in a Trappist monastery. Thus came about the famous conversion of the great satanist and describer of the obscene Black Mass (which, by the way, he had never attended).

#### IV

Anatole France and Remy de Gourmont are, I am pleased to consider, among the most emancipated intelligences the world has produced. Their sound reason and sanity stand out distinctly in a world of stupidities, hopeless muddling, confusion of issues, wrong emphasis, duplicity, hypocrisy,

sentimentality, intolerance, and petty vanities. They were contemporaries, until 1915, when Remy de Gourmont died at his desk of a cerebral hemorrhage—the very death he had attributed to the journalist in *Une Nuit au Luxembourg*. They were almost neighbors. Gourmont inhabited a modest apartment lined with books on the fourth floor in the rue des Saints Pères, a short distance from the *Mercure de France* of which he was the brain; Anatole France makes his home in the magnificent and richly furnished Villa Said on the outskirts of Paris.

They were both ironic skeptics, "working the same side of the street" with incredible unconcern with each other: only once in his volume of work does France mention Gourmont—in a cursory review in the *Temps* of Gourmont's small study of the Latin poetry of the middle-ages; and Gourmont repays the compliment by referring most casually to France only four times, I think, in his great body of critical work.

France, by a trick of fate, achieved world renown and a popular success. His royalties are enormous considering the nature and excellence of his work. He has been burdened with honors. Remy de Gourmont remained until his death a man known only to a few select and appreciative minds. He subsisted upon the sparse royalties of his numerous books and upon his advising editorship at the *Mercure*.

These peers in the realm of thought met only twice—shortly before Gourmont's death. Mutual admirers had endeavored to bring them together. Finally André Rouveyre the artist visited France with this purpose in view.



He brought Gourmont's name into the conversation. France expressed a desire to meet him and asked Rouveyre to bring him to Villa Said. Rouveyre was dubious about suggesting to the proud hermit of the Rue des Saints Pères that he discommode himself to make a pilgrimage to France, the universal celebrity and member of the Academy. He told Edouard Champion of France's invitation and Champion took upon himself to escort Gourmont to Villa Said.

France paid his guest several polite compliments and talked at random, apropos of nothing, on erudite subjects.

Gourmont, who was ill at ease in the presence of others and, who was afflicted with an impediment of the speech which made talking difficult, said little. The visit was brief. Gourmont was overjoyed when France accepted his invitation to visit him in return.

Not long after France repaid the courtesy, Rouveyre was in Gourmont's apartment. The philosopher and poet was still vain over the fact that France had visited him. With a slow voice, swelling with pride, Gourmont said, as if speaking of a god: "He came to see me . . . He sat there . . . in that very chair you are now occupying."

## Oblivion

BY OSCAR WILLIAMS

If one should ask when I am gone,  
 "Why do his poems stir and dream  
 Like shadows when the stars are sweeping  
 Their silver music down a stream?"—

If one should speak, so, tell him this:  
 "The stars were burning in his brain  
 As fixedly as in the heavens,  
 And held as beauty in the rain."

If one should question, tell him this:  
 "The stars were luminous gazing eyes  
 Leaning above the pool of darkness,  
 Looking for him beneath the skies.

They came to him through fog, through sleep,  
 Through all the vast, deep loneliness of space,  
 How could he let them go unanswered  
 While beauty lifted up her face!"

# The Story Writer Proposes

BY FRANCIS ROLT-WHEELER

"I WISH you'd propose," she said, peevishly, looking away from the semi-bald swain, who was holding her to his breast according to the most approved manner of romancers.

"I'm doing it, or, rather," he corrected himself, "I'm leading up to it. It comes in the next paragraph. My only trouble—"

"Well?" she queried, when the pause had grown uncomfortably long.

"My only trouble," he repeated, "is that I'm not quite sure as to the style I ought to do it in."

"You ought to know, if anybody does," she retorted, "you make your living by selling love stories."

"Writing them!" he corrected. "But that's just the point. Sad experience has taught me that I can't sell a story to an editor unless the love-making is in the style he personally approves. Surely, in real life, where a lot more is involved, one ought to be as well posted in a girl's notions as in an editor's. If I knew which were your favorite magazines?" he ventured.

"I like different ones," the girl answered. "The *Ladies Home Journal*, the *Masses*, the *Scientific American*, the —"

"Why don't you add the *Police Gazette* and the *Journal of Animal Behavior*?" he queried plaintively. "Do you call that, giving a chap a clue? What kind of a mental mixture are you, Mary, anyway?"

"You asked which ones I liked," she retorted, "and I told you."

"But which?" he persisted. "How can I propose in all those styles? I'll try, of course, if you like."

He waited for a reply, but receiving none, continued:

"I suppose I could propose to you in *Ladies Home Journal* style, something like this, perhaps:

"Seizing the fateful moment towards which the stars in their courses had been leading him—ever notice how fond Bok is of stars in their courses?—he gulped down his rising emotion, and, facing her manfully, as a man faces the woman he truly loves, blurted out—"

"No!" she cried, wriggling out of his arms, not too far, however, so that she could nestle down again, "that won't do at all. Besides, they don't talk like that in the *Ladies Home Journal*."

"My dear lady, you mistake," he corrected her, "I sold 'em a story which had that very sentence in it, the one about 'facing her manfully,' etcetera."

The proposee sniffed scornfully. (Why not propose?)

"On the other hand," he continued, "you said you like the *Masses*. A proposal in their pages would go something like this:

"I know, Mary," he said, "that a capitalistic society regards the love of an honest man as a paltry thing unless it is decked in the disguise of frenzied superiority, but I, Mary, I, who have

faced unmurmuringly the mad mouths of a murderous moralism—”

“Nonsense!” quoth she, “I’m sure the *Masses* never published such stuff as that!”

“No,” he agreed, sadly, “they didn’t. They saw the alliteration of that last phrase and sent it back to me with the remark that they were fed upon vers libre. They didn’t know it was prose.”

“Perhaps it wasn’t,” she snapped back.

“You may be right, Mary, you may be right,” the story writer agreed. “Now, as for the *Scientific American*,” he continued, warming to his subject, “I’m not one of the family over there, and I’ve never tried to break in with fiction, but I should imagine this would be their style:

“‘In the upper left quadrant of the thorax, the driving mechanism is a four-chambered pump, comparable, in some respects, to a four-cycle Otto engine. The gas of her charm being duly vaporized and drawn into his heart, the contraction of the left ventricle, comparable, again, to the up-stroke of the piston, compressed his emotions to the expansive force of several atmospheres, and the appropriate moment, acting as a spark-plug, he —’”

“You needn’t continue,” she said stiffly, “it’s always tiresome to hear a man talk when he thinks he is being clever. And you needn’t rack your brains to try and think up proposals in the style of the *Police Gazette* or the *Journal of Animal Behavior*, either! Haven’t you any ideas of your own, except what you have put into stories?”

“Good Lord, no,” he answered readily, “I haven’t enough for the stories, alone. Nobody has. Why, every little idea I ever possessed has had to do duty in half a dozen stories, at least, some of them, more. Of course, if I were to follow my own feelings—I always was lazy—I’d propose in a different way entirely.”

“How?”

“I’d say—‘Mary, marry me.’”

“Is that your real proposal?”

“That’s the real one,” he said, “but you see how useless it would be from the story point of view, no atmosphere, no description, no nothing! Even at two cents a word that would only be six cents.”

Mary sat up perfectly straight, with an air of relief.

“So that’s your proposal,” she said. “I’m glad to have it, because you’ve been making it hard for me for some time. A girl can’t say ‘No’ to a proposal she hasn’t had. I wanted you to propose, Billy, so as to get it out of the way. It’s ‘no,’ of course, and if you want to know why, it’s because I’m going to marry Bob Alboys next month.”

He looked at her with lack-lustre eyes.

“I suppose,” he said, “I ought to tear my hair a la *Cosmopolitan*, or go out sadly in the waning afternoon, as the *Delineator* would have me do, or put a bullet through Bob’s brain, in the spirit of *Adventure*. But, Mary, since it happens to be the truth, I’ll make a *Smart Set* ending and murmur to you softly:

“‘So glad you refused me, Mary, for I married Lily yesterday.’”

# Have We a Literary Capital?

BY LLEWELLYN JONES

**A**LTHOUGH New York and Boston are not as yet, one imagines, disturbed over the matter, it is rather interesting that within a few months of the time when Mr. H. L. Mencken declared that Chicago was the literary capital of America the *Double Dealer* should announce itself as a national magazine from the South.

There is a challenge in this that is worth considering. I have always had a private suspicion that Mr. Mencken's famous remark about Chicago was not correctly quoted. Rather I reconstruct the incident something after this fashion. As the famous critic reaches his destination and ascertains that the train has really stopped because it has reached Chicago—and not merely Niles, Michigan, or some such minor place—he gets off the car, and firmly planting his foot upon Chicago soil declares: Chicago is *now* the literary capital of America.

And it might not be an exaggeration at that to say that wherever two or three good authors are gathered together and Mencken comes into the midst of them, that his advent would sufficiently tip the balance to make that spot the center of literary gravity for the time being.

And in Chicago we undoubtedly have the two or three authors. And we have our so-called "school" of poetry. So why should we not, with Mr. Mencken's reported encouragement, lay claim to being the capital of literary America?

For my own part I think that there are a number of weighty reasons. For a capital in the full sense of the word there should be not only the habitats of the best authors but there should be the publishing centers—and Chicago is not in it with either New York or Boston as a publishing center. And there should be traditions, and both the East and the South have more literary tradition than the Middle West.

Our premier novelist, of course, is Sherwood Anderson. His work is notable for its psychological realism, but hardly for its artistic form. In fact it is not doing him an injustice to say that he despises artistic form. None of his novels is in my opinion as good as his book of short stories, "Winesburg, Ohio". Anderson has a natural aptitude for the short sketch. When it comes to the novel his aptitude carries him for a certain length; then the point is reached where art is necessary; where the story no longer unrolls but must be built—and the reader can usually see just when that point has been reached in Mr. Anderson's work.

If we were to discuss Chicago as a center of novel writing we could make out a good case for the contention that it was many years ago that Chicago was at its relative best. For in the 'nineties when Henry B. Fuller was writing his earlier realistic stories and Hamlin Garland was at the height of his fame Chicago was making an enviable name for itself—but in those days there was



no Henry L. Mencken to advertise the fact.

In discussing the question today the most instructive approach is through poetry. For in Chicago we have two of the best known American poets, Edgar Lee Masters and Carl Sandburg; we have the ever active magazine, *Poetry*, edited by Miss Harriet Monroe, herself well known as a poet; we have Eunice Tietjens who has followed her two volumes of verse, "Profiles from China" and "Body and Raiment" with a poetic novel, "Jake" recently reviewed in these columns; we have Alice Corbin Henderson, a Chicago poet although she is now residing in Santa Fe, New Mexico; we have Mark Turbyfill's original talent; while not far from us, in Springfield, there is Vachel Lindsay, poet and Utopian, with a mind and soul saturated with Middle West idealism, and in Davenport, Iowa, only a short distance from us, there is Arthur Davison Ficke.

Only the more "radical" of these writers, however, give their influence and its name to "the Chicago school" and the name is hardly an enviable one. Indeed one of its cardinal tenets appears to be that the less you know about a subject the better work you can do in it. The most explicit apostle of this view is Mr. Sherwood Anderson. We have spoken of him as a novelist. The reader may be surprised to hear that in the few short years since he wrote his first novel he has also produced work—and sold it—in the mediums of poetry and painting.

His poetry was first published in Miss Monroe's magazine, and then in a book by the John Lane Company, and it is supposed to be in free verse. Inci-

dentally I may say that most free verse is written by people who quite misunderstand what regular verse it. They think it is a rigidly patterned, artificial method which cramps the writer's originality. So far is this from being the case that the great difficulty of the free verse writer is to avoid writing regular verse by accident. This difficulty Mr. Anderson has been quite unable to avoid. His book of poems is called "Mid-American Chants," and here is a sample quotation:

Forgotten Song.

"Always at the kitchen door the gaunt  
wolf stands.

Grey wolf—old wolf—evil and old—  
Keep ever thy hungry gleaming eyes,  
Thy fangs to kill  
Thy heart of hate.

Now my brother infallible, stay in the  
darkness there.

"Long, long ago, when days were new,  
Fresh born of cornfields, undefiled,  
Under the moon

They fought at night,

Into his body the wolf-love, won in the  
darkness there . . ."

There are five more stanzas, but these will do for analysis. In the first place, taking the content alone, we see that it is improvisation rather than worked out poetry. Is it the days, in the second stanza which are fresh-born of corn-fields or were the days merely new, and was it "Man" fresh born of cornfields who, undefiled, fought the wolf? And throughout the poem there are ejaculations which not being reduced to grammatical subordination, do not make sense.

And what can we say of the form? It is certainly not free verse nor is it

ordered verse, although each line is in itself in one of the regular metres. In fact, taking each line in its order we have the following metres represented: 1, Four beat quadruple metre or can be read trochaically. 2, The same, with pauses instead of some of the syllables. The two lines at least keep step with each other. 3, Here we abruptly change to a four beat iambic, followed by 4 and 5, Each a two beat iambic. Then in 6 we return to a six beat line in falling rhythm. But a more violent wrench comes when we begin the second stanza with the very same iambic lilt as that one time favorite, "In days of old when knights were bold" which runs right through until we reach the last line ("Under the moon they fought at night" being metrically one line) when we return to our six beat line.

But free verse ought not to be a hodge-podge of ordinary metres.

It is in connection with painting however that Mr. Anderson has boldly announced his theory: that technique is quite unnecessary to art. He exhibited a number of paintings in Chicago and in New York—and sold some at that—and in a circular letter he described how he was led, by the emotions aroused when he saw a certain sea-scape, to paint. The call to paint came as a purely emotional one and it was instantly obeyed. He had no technique and he did not paint to represent objects—but simply used color and abstract form to express his emotions. When the emotion is strong enough, says Anderson, all you have to do is to let it guide your brush. A captivating theory, but is it a true one? Certainly, if it is, true artists waste a great deal of time

in learning to draw. But then, if it were true for one art it ought to be true for all. I advise the reader to try the experiment of putting a very emotional but musically uneducated person in front of a piano!

What we really have, then, in Mr. Anderson's verse and in his painting, and we have it largely in Miss Monroe's acceptance of free verse from all sorts of picturesque, but uneducated people for publication in her magazine, is naïveté erected into a theory of art and made the criterion. When I first criticized Mr. Anderson's poetry he wrote me a letter of acknowledgment in which he said that I was a "dear old pedant". And I am sure he would call the art instructors of Chicago pedants.

But as long as art is art—for, as Goethe said, art is called art because it is not nature—we must have not only the nature, the *élan vital*, but this other element which Anderson calls pedantry.

And the trouble with the Chicago school is that that it lacks it. But all Chicago writers do not belong to the Chicago school. The trouble is that when we erect Chicago into a literary capital we take the most typically Western writers as our excuse for so doing. What we ought to do is not to talk in terms of a literary capital but in terms of a literary center of gravity or center of population. In that case we can see how the center has progressively shifted. First it was in London—for early America was frankly colonial in its literary life. Then it was New York and Boston, with the influence of the South pulling upon it rather steadily. Now the Middle West asserts its pull,

and as I began by saying the advent of *The Double Dealer* pulls it nearer the South. When the Pacific coast recovers from its weather and its absurd spirit of commercial boasting, something may come from there, but at present the local Pacific coast poetry published in books often absurdly decorated does not augur anything very much from that quarter. Bohemian Clubs cannot produce literature—although we must not forget that Gertrude Atherton is a Californian.

For my own part I think the South is going to have more to say than she has yet said. She has the background that encourages literature; she has besides the *Double Dealer* at least one scholarly and literary magazine of unusual merit

—the *Sewanee Review*—and although I do not know how many poets she has I do know that she has one of fine achievement and greater promise: William Alexander Percy, the author of "Sappho in Levkas" and "In April Once."

What we should hope is that our literary center should still shift as section after section of our yet inarticulate country becomes self-conscious and sings and creates. And in aiding that growing self-consciousness we shall be rendering the artist the greatest of all services—providing him with an audience. For that is the one thing that the serious American artist most tragically lacks.

## Arrangement in Black and Gold

*New Orleans, 1821.*

BY WALTER McCLELLAN

The lovely Portuguese is dead,  
Tall candles burn about her head.  
Her negro slave, Lili-Alixé,  
Prays with an ivory crucifix.  
Until strange men knock on the door,  
And walk upon the painted floor . . .  
O men who bear this poor dead woman  
Unto that place where nothing's human,  
Behold your shadows this noon day  
And know that she is less than they.  
Rejoice that these black phantoms move,  
Your living presences to prove:  
Yourselves that still the heavy sun  
Finds here alive, and shines upon.

# Pigeons on the Beach

BY PADRAIC COLUM

Pigeons that have flown from the courts behind the orchards; pigeons that run along the beach to take sand into your crops, what contrast there is between you, birds of a rare stock, and the waves that know only the buccaneer sea gulls and the sand marten emigrants. And what contrast there is between your momentary wildness here and your graces in the courtyards above!

You rise up and fly five wave lengths from the beach. And now a strange element is under you—the green, tumbling untried sea. With that half-remembered element below you, maybe you think of rocky breeding places and of strong mates. Bravely you hang above the untried, alluring sea,—just five wave lengths out.

You remind me of the ladies who came to the gypsy carts that were on the beach yesterday and swore that they would take to the gypsy ways.

But you stay no longer above the waves. Round you turn and alight on the hard sand again.

And now you run along by the waves taking more grains of sand into your crops.

A wave break startles you. You take to your wings again. But now you see the dove-cotes beyond the orchards and you fly towards them.

And all night long you will hear the sea breaking and you will dream, maybe, in the dove-cotes of strong mates and rocky breeding places.

At dawn you will fly down to the beach again, run along the hard sand, take grains into your crops, and fly five wave lengths from the beach.

The sand martens will have left their holes, and you will see them gathered in flocks on the sand-heights, the dusty gypsies.

And you will not notice when they have departed, going without after-thoughts over that green alluring element, the sea.



# A Book Hunter in New Orleans

BY GIDEON TOWNSEND STANTON

*"Life's short hours too fast are hast-  
ing—*

*Sweet amours cannot be lasting."*

**O**F books I speak. I have loved them from the time when as a little boy I listened to stories of great doings and called for more. There were bookcases throughout the house, downstairs and up, in the library and halls, even in the parlor. In all, there were rows upon rows of books, short, tall, thick, thin, with and without illustrations. Of bindings there was a great variety from the plainest of cloth to embossed morocco. One Christmas I sent an urgent request to Santa Claus for a bookcase all my own and the good man sent it me. Soon its shelves were filled, G. A. Henty occupying all of one and in company were Kirk Monroe, Thomas Nelson Page, Howard Pyle and Stevenson. Of course there were others whom I don't recall. One of these books I loaned to a friend and it came back to me its pages soiled and its reverse cover scarred by the circular mark of a drinking glass. The book was of no intrinsic value, merely a juvenile, but I felt its damage as to this day I feel a sadness over a mutilated page or cover or a set with a missing volume.

As the years passed the number of my books increased, their character changed and they were of a maturer membership. I gathered gradually here and there, a few coming as gifts from friends, many from nooks and corners the result of saunterings with an open eye.

Here, in New Orleans, the number of bookshops is meagre and some that existed have long disappeared. My first recollection is of Wharton's where, on frequent trips with my grandmother, I was given the run of the place and permitted by the kindly proprietor to look within the covers to my heart's content. You recall José Delgado who died about ten years ago? A little rotund man with a bald head and a courteous manner befitting a native of Sunny Spain. The front of the shop was presided over by Staub and his magazines. In the rear at a little desk sat José puffing at a cigarette, at his elbow a tray containing the ashes of many others. Through the smoke rings loomed obscurely the dingy backs of his stock in trade. Most of the books were in Spanish but I remember having seen a set of Ireland's "Life of Napoleon" with the Cruikshank colored plates and I have always wondered into whose hands it fell. There was also a bibliography of Don Quixote in two volumes with facsimile titlepages of the many editions. José and I had many a pleasant chat and though my shelves contain nothing from his shop but a set of Moliere, I recall him with pleasure.

In Poydras Street Mrs. Jacobs kept a shop of books in some profusion. I think she also kept a parrot, but if so, I recall no speaking acquaintance with the bird. Quite a number of my books have come from here, for her prices were not only reasonable but markedly so when purchases were made in bulk.

I have beside me a little volume called "Under A Fool's Cap," Songs by Daniel Henry Jun., London, Kegan, Paul, Trench and Co., 1884, with the inscription on the forepage "For dear Alice from the Sister of the Poet, G. H. T., Xmas 1900." This is the edition that was printed entire in the beautiful format of the Mosher Press. I have a letter from Mr. Mosher in which he has kindly informed me in reference to this edition. "It is a very scarce book as you may readily understand. I got hold of two copies, one in London and the other in Cincinnati, and yours the 3rd., is the only one I have heard about although of course there must be others scattered far and near." It is of local interest that the aforementioned Daniel Henry Jun., was the son of D. H. Holmes, the founder of the great department store that bears his name. From Mrs. Jacobs I also secured one of a celebrated series of sporting novels by R. S. Surtees, "Ask Mamma, or the Richest Commoner in England," with illustrations, some colored, by John Leech, London, Bradbury and Evens, 1858, for the sum of fifty cents. Another frequent caller at her shop was Mr. William Beer, a most indefatigable seeker after hidden treasure who always made me feel I had come just too late. His specialty is Americana and in those days in this class of books, especially Louisiana, there were good pickings.

When Mrs. Jacobs retired I drifted for a while and then sought Royal Street. Here, in the heart of the old French Quarter I found a doorway flanked by showcases full of books; I entered and after becoming accustomed to the semi-twilight I saw in a chair

a slim little man with a pale and narrow face and eye still bright, though gone the crackle of a glance that in youth must have been there. This was Monsieur Julien who, today grown more remote is the surviving spirit of the old quarter. He is gentle of voice and impresses one with his detachment of being as though arrested by the atmosphere of the books of a by-gone day. In former years he made periodical trips to Europe bringing back with him choice items for his stock and as frequently strangers visited him many are the private collections that have gained thereby.

Approaching within a few years of today I find myself again in Poydras Street in the queer little shop and dwelling place of Michael Lynch. What a contrast here! A man of great size and weight, broad of girth and full of face, beardlessness accentuating cheek and jowl. The head is bald but always covered by a cap. Frequently Mr. Lynch makes trips for stock, returning with a well filled sack upon his shoulder, and here's where his bulk is handy for no man of ordinary proportions could walk for blocks with a big sack full of books. Fortunately I have been present at the end of these hunting forays when the contents were dumped upon the floor. Frankly, my friend, I now have a reverence for sacks for I have seen some very nice books pour out. It is not always potatoes that come from sacks! Whilst I would look over the books with a puppy or kitten playing at my heels, Lynch would seat himself, fill his black pipe and between short puffs begin to talk; often it was on some topic of the day, an author or an article lately read;

once in a while it would be the reading of some original verses, and if the former it was of interest, and if the latter they were by no means without merit. Lynch has travelled, moreover he has rubbed shoulders with the crowd and nothing humanizes more. Lynch moved some few years ago and now he and his books are literally tucked in between an auto supply house and a restaurant on a busy street, in the shadow of the postoffice, and facing Lafayette Square. Lynch is Elizabethan.

Returning to Royal Street I must not fail to mention Alexander Hay, formerly an architect, and now the proprietor of an antique shop wherein books are incidental to the ebb and flow of a wonderful variety of stuff. Hay not only may be seen any hour of the day but I might say of the night as well. I have wandered in late of an evening and have been rewarded for so doing. The hunter soon learns that a dozen visits may be unavailing but the thirteenth will suffice for all. It was on one of these nocturnal flying visits that I secured a thin volume bound in black cloth with the Mexican eagle stamped in gold and the title "*Cortez the Conqueror—A Tragedy*," by Louis F. Thomas, Washington, D. C., 1857. It was the inscription on the foreleaf that caught my eye: "Major G. T. Beauregard, from Gen'l. John A. Quitman, Natchez, Miss., July 11th, 1857." The book is dedicated to General Quitman and but for the inscription I am aware of no especial value. A first edition of Clarke's "*Ten Great Regilious*" contains the signa-

ture of Charles J. Bonaparte. From him have come several interesting books on Louisiana and New Orleans; Dubroca's "*L'Itineraire des Francais dans la Louisiane*," Paris, 1802, containing a map of Louisiana and the English Colonies by Guillaume Delisle, dated 1782, ludicrously large for the little volume but with every indication of having been originally bound in: An Act to Incorporate the Town of Carrollton, passed by the Legislature of Louisiana in the year 1845; Ordinances, Resolutions and Permanent Orders of the Town of Carrollton, La., Carrollton 1855; the Ordinances and Resolutions of the Town of Carrollton, compiled by order of the Mayor and Council, by C. C. Porter, Lafayette, 1850. Another volume of nineteen different pamphlets includes "Rules and Regulations Established by the Orleans Navigation Company for the Government and Police of Vessels and Boats Navigating the Bayou St. John, Canal of Carondelet and Basin, New Orleans; Ben. Levy, 1825, with English and French texts on opposite pages. Items such as these are altogether of local interest, possessing considerable historical value.

"The Olde Booke Shoppe" was established in Royal Street about two years ago. It is a snug, tight-fitting little place requiring a brevity of search for one to become familiar with the contents of its shelves. John McClure is the proprietor. A writer of distinction, he is primarily a poet whose verse has a rare quality that lingers long and mellow after the page is closed.

## Life and Sleep

BY J. VANDERVOORT SLOAN

I like the world so much it seems not right  
That I should ever sleep—  
I have a tryst to keep  
With life by day and night.  
There are such great adventures that I might  
Miss finding, if into the heap  
Of cushioned dreams I let myself sink deep—  
I want both darkness and the light.  
When blue night has her stars pinned on  
Or moonlit night makes stars and sky seem pale,  
And dew is on the grass—a fairy's veil—  
And trees stretch out their arms like phantoms wan,  
I want the night. But after that is done  
I want the sun.

## Riders in the Dust

BY CHARLOTTE HARDIN

How far from touching of the hands of kin  
Were the great early giants of the world  
For whom the vaster life but half-unfurled  
Revealed its secret visioning within.  
Their groping fingers found but dreams to spin  
And from the flaming essences of thought  
A blurred prophetic shadowing was wrought—  
A pattern bright with love and dark with sin.

Dante and Milton—shadow-spinners all!  
Had you no glimpses of a vaster day,  
No forecast of a wider clarity  
When a new sunlight on the earth should fall  
And giant-broods, weary of shadow-play,  
Should carve their dreams in clear reality?



# Paris Letter

BY ALFRED KREYMBORG

THIS noon, the good ship Rotterdam stopped in mid-ocean, and many of us who were in a hurry to get away from America, or to reach Europe, were visibly annoyed. It so happened that we were at dinner, and our annoyance quickly evaporated before the prospect of the next course—and the courses to follow—for the sea appetite is the most ravenous and the least quickly satisfied. The ship stopped for an hour, and if this letter is an hour late in reaching its destination in far-away New Orleans, the fault is not mine, nor even the ship's, so much as it is to be charged to the action of a man in the steerage. No, one must go even further in the search for the culprit, back to the crowded Dutch pier in Hoboken, to the man, woman or child who robbed the man in the steerage of his laboured, hoarded savings, many years old. The ship stopped an hour because of the search, futile in this case, made for the man's body. He was last seen lifting the sign of the cross before jumping overboard, and the water, marvelously calm this July day, quietly closed over his dream, whatever it was. There was considerable excited comment—I will say that for us—when the news travelled from table to table—but after all, he was not one of ours, and except for the romantic thrill at so cheap a price it gave some of us to have a man drown himself from a ship on which we were sailing—the ship ours, and each one of its happenings ours—

to be set down in our diaries, or letters home—there was little to be gained on a pleasure jaunt like ours from horrible thoughts, so the horrible thoughts had to be submerged with the same gesture, if possible, with which the sea brushes down its jetsam.

\* \* \*

Paris, July 4.

Shortly after my arrival in Paris, I tried to register at a small, out-of-the-way hotel in the Rue Jacob. I say tried, advisedly. I was in fact interrupted by the sight of two letters lying near the register addressed to gentlemen whose names and persons are familiar to me; Sherwood Anderson and Paul Rosenfeld, I was so dazed by the coincidence that I had to cling to that nearest and ever ready bromide, concerning the infinitesimal size of the infinite, to guide me out of my amazement. I had seen these two gentlemen two months before in New York. We had planned—since the whole of the American art world, or nearly the whole, was on its way to Europe—to meet somewhere in Paris, the actual rendezvous to be left to destiny. And here they were—or rather, nay and alas, were not. For the landlady assured me that the gentlemen had left for London the day before. And Paris seemed a little greyer for their departure, and my sly anticipation of secretly enjoying the effect of Paris on Winesburg, Ohio, was grievously disappointed. Later, I was consoled with the news that the pair had success-

fully negotiated the translation into French of a book each—"Mid-Western Chants" and "Musical Portraits." And that Sherwood expects to publish "Winesburg, Ohio," and "Poor White" in London. And I was no longer entirely sorry the twain had escaped me.

The same afternoon, while entrusting my timid feet and dazed brain to a first encounter with the boulevards, I met Robert McAlmen of "Contract" fame (vide the "Dial" of July). He conducted me to the house of James Joyce. The much discussed Dubliner was in no condition to discuss anything, least of all himself. We found him sitting in a dark room, with two pairs of glasses over his eyes. He is suffering agonies due to an infection of the right eye. But the man is game. Despite our protest, he stuck to the gaff of gossip for an hour. During which I was advised of the happy item that "Ulysses," after being four times suppressed in the *Little Review* and being unanimously rejected by American and British publishers, is coming out in book form in Paris in the autumn under the imprint of Shakespeare & Co., 8 Rue Dupuytren. The edition is, of course, private, and will be limited to one thousand copies. It will be a 600 page affair divided into editions to be sold at 150, 250 and 350 francs per copy, which, at the present rate of exchange, is equivalent to 12, 20 and 28 dollars.

Cousin Ezra was not far away. I found him in the happy throes of being translated into French (quite the pastime now-a-days) by a certain Monsieur Llana, who is also translating three of the novels of Theodore Dreiser. You see, one isn't far from home in Paris. I had

a three-hour session with the expatriate who so persistently and bitterly pounds America. He is a formidable antagonist on the ground, but not invulnerable. Many of the quips he indulges might just as readily be directed at London or Paris. I had never met him in the flesh, although we have corresponded intermittently for the last eight years. He knows as little about present day America as an Indo-Chinaman, and if he knew more, would not acknowledge it. On the other hand, he is a battler, an infighter, a religious fanatic in behalf of the fellow artists he believes in—just now, Joyce, Eliot and Lewis and the younger Frenchmen, Jean Cocteau and the Vadas—as he was formerly the spokesman of the verticists and before then of the Imagists. I had the honour of publishing the anthology *Cousin Ezra* edited, the first collection of its kind, in the "Globe" now defunct. He is to have a new book in the autumn to be published by Boni and Liveright.

The same evening, thanks to the courtesy of the editor of one of the new French periodicals, "L'Amour de L'Art" I retired to a small maison, where I was greeted with another shock, this one sufficient to force me to an early couch. An inoffensive, commonplace restaurant, but at a very small table scarcely large enough to accommodate four little humans, sat three huge gentlemen: Messieurs Braque, Derain and Satie. I was presented to the trio and they were like everybody here, most cordial. I enjoyed the secret satisfaction of studying their surprise when they were advised that their work is "bien connu" in America. The truth is, I've heard piano pieces by Eric Satie

in remote corners of the States; while Fifth Avenue has been acquainted with the paintings of Derain and Braque for nearly ten years. Andre Derain looks physically able to avenge the defeat of Carpentier at the hands of Dempsey. Derain is huge. He was wounded during the late unpleasantness, and simply had to be cared for, as his wife stated the case. "They will never dig a grave deep enough to bury Andre in." And so he stands, with Picasso and Matisse, at the head of French painting to-day. Eric Satie looks like a Gallic edition of Bernard Shaw. Nevertheless, if one didn't catch glimpses of his roguish eyes—so mild and couteous in his manner one might mistake him for a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne. And yet he is probably the foremost comedian in the domain of music, Daurier reincarnated in sound.

One's second day in Paris resembled

one's first. One encountered Tristan Tzara, the founder of Dadaism, as well as two of the leading exponents, Francis Picabia and Jean Cocteau (the present favorite of the boulevards), not to mention Albert Gleizes, the cubist who has painted memorable impressions of New York, and Marcel Duchamp, just returned from the same city and known to us Americans for the "Nude Descending the Stairway." And one heard rumors that Mr. Thayer of the *Dial* is due to-morrow and Marsden Hartley, 5,000 dollars richer for the sale of his paintings at auction, on Wednesday, and Man Ray, the New York Dada, on Thursday, and so on.

But these gentlemen require the effort of another letter. Besides, I'm already exhausted with impressions. And pray I haven't exhausted you in the process of transcription. *Garçon, une autre, s'il vous plait!*

## The Rose

BY PAUL ELDRIDGE

My body was mercilessly crushed  
 In the long and passionate embrace  
 Of two lovers.  
 Generations of roses have blossomed and  
     withered  
 But my soul lives on,  
 Vague and shapeless,  
 In the pinched nostrils  
 Of the old woman.  
 Is this the meaning of immortality?

# Chicago Letter

BY VINCENT STARRETT

WE are in the thick of another circulation campaign undertaken by a morning newspaper, which has stolen a march on its competitors by hiring jobless ex-service men to canvass the residence districts for subscriptions. Daily the doorbell rings and a doughboy on the doorstep advertises his presence, his past, and his immediate purpose, in "a few well-chosen words," to borrow a phrase beloved of the women's clubs. It is supposed to be, and undoubtedly is, a shameful thing that these fellows have been denied employment, and are actually needy, many of them, and the morning newspaper makes the most of the situation. It makes no secret of the fact that it is doing a very fine thing indeed in paying them a salary instead of a commission, and as the cause of the ex-service man is one that makes a wide public appeal, the response of the public has been generous and the circulation of the morning newspaper is advancing by leaps and bounds.

Nevertheless, the shrewd exploitation of these men and their war records to the end that a certain newspaper shall be glorified is a typical and vicious piece of journalistic enterprise. The attitude of the rival journals is interesting. Undoubtedly they would like to speak their minds editorially, but the situation is sufficiently delicate to enforce silence. The same inhibition, indeed, checks my own utterance, for I hold much sympathy and admiration for the men of the war; yet for the newspaper, while I fully recognize the benefits accruing to

its soldier-canvassers, I can find only a sort of admiring contempt.

But the whole business of circulation campaigns, with its tiresome contests and prize offers and coupons, begins mightily to disgust. In recent months the beauty contests, the limerick contests, the "Write a Title" contests, the puzzle games, and all the rest of the depressing manifestations of newspaper intelligence (and of human intelligence as viewed by the newspapers) have filled the journals *ad nauseam*, and threaten to continue indefinitely. Many of the magazines are as bad as the newspapers. Twenty-five dollars for the best letter on Polygamy, on Fidelity, on Perfect Love, on the Care of Infants. "My Most Embrassing Moment" . . . "How I Proposed to My Husband" . . . "The Ideal Love Letter" . . . "The Happiest Moment of My Life" . . . "Why I Admire Dimples" . . .

The childishness of it all is insulting, only the simple-minded victim does not know it. The invitation to falsehood is, of course, obvious, which is unimportant save that no really brilliant lie ever results. Suppose some cynical and disgusted male were to tell the truth in one of these contests!

\* \* \*

Oscar Williams, the poet, has come to live in Chicago, and is at present happily employed in Kroch's International Bookstore. He is slight and slim. His hair has a permanent wave. He wears spectacles. He is very young. He writes excellent poetry. He argues



ferociously. He does not like chop suey. His favorite contemporary is John Masefield. He passes his Sunday afternoons with the Bookfellows. He smokes cigarettes. He admires the stars. He has published in *The Double Dealer*.

Last month he published a group of poems in *Poetry: a Magazine of Verse*, and in the same issue he published also a signed review of several volumes of poems by other poets. The review was entitled, happily, "The Silver Stallion." Mr. Williams began by saying: "Wading through these young first books reminded me of a time I had last summer looking for a run-away horse in the Maine woods." In the same issue, the "Notes on Contributors" betrayed him. They said: "Mr. Oscar Williams . . . will publish next autumn through the Yale Press, his first book of verse." This was a bit rough on Oscar, whose review was really admirable.

\* \* \*

Speaking of Kroch's International Bookstore reminds me that I have not spoken of it before. It is unique. Books imported from every country under Mr. Williams' stars here may be purchased, and the shop has an atmosphere that is delightful. The newest feature is a photograph gallery of celebrities, in which appear the (sometimes disappointing) portraits of many of the best American writers of the day, among them, Cabell, Hergesheimer, George Jean Nathan and John V. A. Weaver. All the photos are photographed to Mr. Kroch.

\* \* \*

The Dill Pickle Club is dead. For years the Dill Pickle Club was a rendezvous for near-thinkers of a radical turn

of mind, long-haired poets and short-haired women, socialists, freethinkers, sex adepts, and publicity seekers generally. It achieved a curious reputation, and parlor bolshevists took their friends there much as, in earlier days, determined bohemians sought the sloppy tables of Madame Galli's and in the swash of Budweiser caught a remote echo of the waves that beat on seacoast Bohemia. At the Dill Pickle, anyone with a "message" was welcome to speak, and for his speaking received half the contents of the impromptu tambourine. There, any night, one might bathe in Bolshevism or Buddhism, get drunk on Baudelaire or Edward Carpenter, or learn the advantages of sabotage or bisexuality. It was all a bit interesting, all more or less innocuous, and all half-baked. The club furnished an admirable show-spot for visitors who were not too sophisticated to be critical, and, in a sense, it will be missed.

\* \* \*

The annual cowboy championship contest in Grant Park, a spectacle vouchsafed Chicago by reason of the sectional popularity of our sporting Mayor, will have come and gone by the time this letter is in print. I have no doubt at this writing that it will be as rough and brutal a performance as the recent Dempsey-Carpentier show, and that it will attract the same sort of red-blooded men and women. One thing perhaps we shall be spared: the illiterate expertings of newspaper specialists, in praise or disparagement of the several champions.

\* \* \*

It should be added that this signal evidence of our municipal greatness

which is to include roping, riding and "bulldogging"—the latter one of the cruelest of sports, involving as it does the hideous torture of bulls—is partly for the benefit of the Minor Children's Home and Aid Society.

\* \* \*

It was my privilege, recently, to read the manuscript of a paper on American Literature prepared by a suburban club woman for reading at her club, I think to the Tuesday Literary Class or some such group. From among many gems of criticism, I culled the following on Brander Matthews:

"His short stories are virtuous but have no thought of others."

"His waves of realism are not plausible but are convincing."

This is delightful and, God knows, it may be true! It suggests the schoolroom scene: Q. Is the earth flatter at the equator or at the poles? A. Yes. Q. Which? A. Flatter.

\* \* \*

I wonder if your editorialist of last month is correct in his supposition that Madison Cawein was a professional gambler? I hope it is true; but I once met Cawein, and he told me something about himself. He was in charge of a poolroom, in his early days, and kept tab on the earnest young gamblers who frequented the cloudy chamber, but I had supposed him only the accountant and boy-manager of a small place whose activities would scarcely justify its being called a gambling hall.

Possibly Cawein *was* a gambler, however; I think most poets are. He was an immensely decent and affable fellow, at any rate, and looked about as much

like a poet as I do a banker. Indeed he looked like a barber, or so it seemed to me, although I may have caught this prejudicial resemblance unconsciously from the fact that he was shaving when I entered his room. Small, gray-haired partly bald, with a close-cropped gray mustache, he was dextrously manipulating an open razor before a hotel mirror.

"And that's where I learned a great deal about human nature," he said. "Ten years in a pool room. Meanwhile, I was longing for nature herself, and as soon as I could I got away and headed for the woods."

\* \* \*

May I say in closing that I am now working on the second edition of my anthology, "In Praise of Stevenson?" I want this new edition to contain every scrap of verse written to or about R. L. S., that it is possible to obtain. The first edition contained about one hundred poems, and I have since brought together about fifty more. I shall thankfully welcome contributions, original or otherwise, from readers or writers who may have such items, together with such bibliographical data concerning the verses as may be available.

\* \* \*

Only occasionally does Walter M. Hill, Chicago's leading antiquarian bookseller, enter the publishing field. When he does, book readers and book buyers are assured an authentic work of a more than usual merit. Mr. Hill has just issued in a limited edition of five hundred copies, "The Lost Oracles," a Masque, by James Westfall Thompson, in which Mr. Thompson dramatizes the struggle

between the cults of antiquity and historical Christianity. It is a distinguished volume. The odes, hymns and lyric songs that sing in its pages are particularly beautiful, and the ritual of the ancient cults is sonorously revealed. The prose descriptions of the temple settings are accurate and verbally lovely. Lovers of the ancient paganism will discover in this work a flavor of old singers known to us only by a few precious

survivals. Physically, the volume is a delight.

Mr. Thompson, a professor of history at the University of Chicago, is a widely known classical and mediaeval scholar. A few years ago he successfully hoaxed the book world with an extraordinary poem, "The Last Pagan," which purported to be a translation of a long-lost manuscript, discovered by the translator in a French monastery.

## Sanctuary

BY GUSTAV DAVIDSON

I have remembrance of a tumult of faces  
 Pouring past me on the thoroughfare,  
 And of a city strange with luminous places,—  
 And how I bathed me in the currents there.  
 Beauty was all too frequent to be rare:  
 And I forgot the spell of starry spaces  
 Athirst for women in the lamplight glare,  
 Haunted by shadows and their fugitive graces.

But when I left the broad ways in the gloaming  
 Weary with beauty which I could not share,  
 I turned me, to your sanctuary, homing,  
 And climbed a more resplendent flight of stair,  
 And from those perilous nights of deep sea roaming  
 Found harbour in the quiet of your hair.

# Reviews

## THE EMPEROR JONES

By EUGENE O'NEILL.

(*Boni and Liveright, 1921.*)

**F**EAR, that most imperative element of man's psychology, is the framework on which is built Eugene O'Neill's thoroughly original play, "The Emperor Jones." There is no particular pigeon hole of types in which this one character might be placed. The Emperor Jones, the ebony-hued, self-appointed royalty in garish uniform, brass buttons, chevrons and gold braid, makes his first appearance when he demands, "Who dare whistle dat way in my palace? Who dare wake up de emperor?" This pompous ruler reigns over a colony of fearing subjects, native of an un-named island of the West Indies. He is the Emperor Jones whom an ordinary, plebeian bullet cannot kill —no, only the silver bullet which he, himself, has had made can do that. Only one, Smithers, knows of the crimes he is being sought for by the white man. But the Emperor humiliates him with, "Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does."

That point of the story where, the rebelling subjects assembled in the hills, the emperor starts toward the Great Forest fleeing for his life, with the continual rhythmic beating of the tom-toms in the distance as an invisible background, is the beginning of a series of dramatic surprises that cannot leave a question in one's mind as to who is the nearest approach to a truly great dramatist that America can boast.

From the beginning of the emperor's flight to the end of the play, the monotonous tom-toms of the rebelling natives can be heard. The suspense of the play is heightened by the terror-exciting sound that increases or slackens as the moment demands. While this is a one-act play, it is composed of eight scenes, all but the first depicting some stage of the flight of the fallen monarch through the Great Forest.

As he realizes he has lost his bearings in the dark, the cocky, self-assurance that he has not quite shaken off, changes to fear and finally to madness. The criminal episodes of his life come before him in hallucinations as he repeatedly sinks exhausted. Each fear taunts him until he fires at it, when, consequently the maddening sound of the tom-tom grows perceptibly louder in the distance. As the final hallucination possesses him, and, crazed, he has fired at it, he has fired the silver bullet which was to have been reserved for the Emperor Jones. They brought him out of the Great Forest at the spot where he went in at the beginning of his flight; but because he was the Invincible they had killed him with silver bullets. We are glad they were not lead.

There is much of interest in this play for the professional and dilettante Freuds, Coriats and Tridons. G. Stanley Hall in his recent "Morales" says, "Where fear is yielded to with abandon almost anything may be done. Men lose their orientation in space and may rush directly at the enemy instead of fleeing from him. In panicky fugues men of.



ten tend to flee over the same course in which they have advanced, sometimes going around sharp angles instead of taking quicker short-cuts to safety because they have advanced along these angles."

Mr. O'Neill, with a comprehensive knowledge of stage technicalities, places his characters in this work in the settings that make more subtle the designedly subtle, and accentuate the obvious. In the first scene, the arrogance of the emperor is exaggerated by the impression of exhausting and enervating heat. It would be hard for his subjects to find the spirit to resist a sovereignty in so oppressive an atmosphere. The very crimson and orange of the setting conveys the idea of dazzling heat.

The Theatre Guild—whose approval gives any play the pass-key to fame, so discriminating have they been in their choosing—first introduced the play in New York. With Charles Gilpen, the negro player, as the Emperor Jones, it is hoped that lovers of the drama outside of the Metropolis may some day see this work on the road. There are two other plays in this book. "Diff'rent" has to do with sea-folk, and the complex psychology of the characters makes a lapse of thirty years necessary between the two acts that comprise the play. In this we do not have the amusing dialogue that lightens "The Emperor Jones." "The Straw", to be produced this winter, is of the sanatorium and the story engrossing, but we wonder if it would not be difficult for any organization but the Theatre Guild to make it anything but disagreeable in its sordid details.

However, in "The Emperor Jones"

Mr. O'Neill takes us to the Land of Fulfillment that we began to look for in "The Moon of the Caribbees" and "Beyond the Horizon."

BEATRICE VAUGHAN DALE.



## DUST

By MR. and MRS. E. HALDEMAN-JULIUS.

(Boni and Liveright, 1921.)

THIS novel is so cunningly blended into a conception of life that the demarcation defies the casual eye and the purpose, if there be one, is forgotten in the simple interest evoked throughout the current of the story.

Rose and Martin Wade threaten momentarily to melt into symbols. But they do not, in spite of the scrupulous objectivity with which their creators regard them, because of the wealth of detail in which they are envisaged and the unique emotional situations and relationships in which circumstances place them. And because they do not so melt away, that undefined, yet not undiscerned, attitude which appears to have dictated the story's major plan is impressed upon the reader with a double force, unless that philosophical unity preserved in the chapter titles "gives away" the secret so closely shielded in the tale.

We might call "Dust" a modern and Americanized allegory of hopelessness, of defeat, of frustration engendered by too close absorption in the pursuit of wealth. In temper, "Dust" is a Kansas variation on a Russian theme, but in its spareness, in the almost perfect relationship between matter and material, it is nearly French.

The story, completely envisaged in terms of farm life and containing a concentrated version of the origin and development of a Kansas farm community, is told with an unobtrusive simplicity, with a satisfying adequateness of detail, yet with an economy of manner that is positively harsh. There is not the slightest yielding to the tempting allurements for a story-teller that linger on the roadside of every plot, such as the tardy infatuation of Martin for the younger Rose. The evolution of Martin's belated affection and the manner in which news of Billie's death is transmitted and received are excellent examples of how beautifully the author's non-involvement in the emotional stresses of their characters can be rendered. Yet passages that can arouse an equally intense emotion on second reading must flower from some depth in the writers.

The nature of the characters, whether yielding to, or resisting, the harsh commands of their environment dominates in the construction of the tale and the writers submit to it in that unfaltering manner in which Martin and Billie and Rose ran true to their courses—the first two to death and the last to a respectable futility.

HARRY SALPETER.



## THE NOISE OF THE WORLD

By ADRIANA SPADONI.

(*Boni and Liveright*, 1921.)

"THE SWING of the Pendulum" was a remarkable first novel. That it was not a false dawn is proved conclusively by the present vol-

ume. Miss Spadoni has a genuine gift. She has something definite to say—and actually succeeds in saying it, if not with directness, at least with lucidity and a certain amount of originality and charm. "The Swing of the Pendulum" should have been cut and pruned. For, though it was wonderfully engrossing, it rambled about unconscionably. She shows, now, a greater mastery of the technique of her art as a novelist.

"The Noise of the World" is a study in idealism. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say a study of idealists.

Of Roger, the lovable, passionate, visionary idealist; of Anne also an idealist, but one of a more dogged variety; of Black Tom, the "idol of the laboring world," who spent his youth in "mines, and shops and libraries;" of Merle, who loved him; and of Katya, the Russian Jewess.

And of the Mitchells who are not idealists at all. They are really rather dreadful people who live in wicked ugliness. An unamiable, dictatorial narrow old man who suffers an unconvincing change of heart, and his silly, ineffectual, well-meaning wife. They have succumbed to pot-roast, which is, after all, only "a pretense." It has not the "open honesty of stew." They are the type of couple who are over-popular in this year's fiction, and they leave one feeling older than the rocks, etc., with one's eyelids more than a little weary.

From this environment Roger takes Anne. Their struggle for happiness, for adjustment, is depicted with sympathetic insight. Miss Spadoni's picture of the tragi-comedy of socialism is strangely moving. "Right Wing, Left Wing

Socialist, Syndicalist, Communist, I. W. W., they're all headed right and there's something the matter with them all." \* \* "Names, names," sighs Black Tom, "all names for the same thing—the new world that's struggling to be born. Science, art, religion, politics, we're all fighting for the same end—to root out the dead old forms, give new growths a chance. We're all beating in our different ways to the same thing—Understanding, Beauty, Unity. One fits in where he can."

There are also the people who see some "great change in the conduct of world affairs looming in huge, vague mass," and the ones who see only the unimportant details. And they accuse one another of using "wrong methods that delay progress." There is one "young man with wild, kind eyes who forgave all bigotry and personal misunderstanding and wrote fierce revolutionary songs, clarion calls to these people whom he forgave for not hearing," and there is a plump little Boston widow who, "for the first time in her life had found an opportunity to berate car conductors—and minor officials in a loud voice. These she called publicly, in piercing tones—'the wage slaves of a rotten system'—and urged them to organize—but, until the arrival of the Millennium, she invested her income with remarkable shrewdness in bonds."

But all these are not Anne's people. It is not her world. Not the sweetly ordered, comfortable sanity she dreams of. She approaches Christian Science—tentatively—with disastrous results, and finally takes her nerve-tortured body and sick heart to be healed by the im-

perishable beauty of the hills.

The book ends upon a note of rather melancholy optimism.

ALICE SESSUMS LEVY.

• • •

## CHARACTER AND OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES

By GEORGE SANTAYANA.

(Scribner's, 1921.)

THE residence of George Santayana for over a quarter of a century at Harvard cast a sort of honor upon the United States. Like Lafcadio Hearn, he was a borrowed star, but he illuminated our murky firmament none the less. He courteously provided us with our saddest lack, a wise man. Now that he has left us, we are without an intelligence.

"Character and Opinion in the United States," Mr. Santayana's very detached reminiscences of American life as he knew it, is an occult work. To the general reader it will be neither interesting nor intelligible. It is the work of a philosopher, long occupied in his cloister with the problem of being. It is a work which must afford deep pleasure to the lovers of literature and thought, but which is directed solely to the few who indulge in these occult pursuits. It is not a contribution of any practical importance to an analysis of the American democracy. Mr. Santayana's attention has always centered on the mind and soul—faculties for which the American democracy is not as yet distinguished. His book is an occult book.

These lectures are devoted to American philosophy, that is to say, to some-

thing that does not exist. With the exception of Mr. Santayana himself, we have not had a sage since Emerson. We have, now, neither a sage nor a real school of philosophy. There is a feverish restlessness in the field of religion, marked by an influx of Orientalism, which may portend something. But, as yet, American life is, as Mr. Santayana says, terribly empty. We haven't any philosophy.

He dismisses William James and Josiah Royce, as they deserve, with very amiable damnation, and in excellent appraisals.

He attempts to outline the American character, as a moral or thinking entity, and finds that it is young, greedy, intoxicated, hopeful, practical, but equipped only with ready-made, second-hand, unquestioned moral, philosophical and religious beliefs. He hopes that eventually American life will stabilize and that in the end we shall have a pervading culture and wisdom. He does not feel certain. But, polished pessimist and keen examiner that he is, Mr. Santayana is never very certain of anything. He admits, in his preface, his premonition of an impending dark age, and offers hope, without firm belief, in a better future. He thinks that our heritage of liberty—English liberty—(which we are so swiftly losing) is our best heritage. Perhaps it was.

The merit of "Character and Opinion in the United States" is that it is an expression of Mr. Santayana's character and opinion. There can be no practical value in a discussion of so frail and airy a thing as American philosophy. The value of the book is the value

of all lyrical literature. Mr. Santayana proceeds in the expression of himself. As the papers in this volume were originally spoken addresses, the perfection of his best cloister-work is not in it. But the intelligent few will enjoy it, as they have enjoyed Mr. Santayana's work for the past thirty years, for its subtlety, its precision, its delicate artistry of style; the exhilarating pessimism and the charming doubt that color all his conclusions.

MARVIN LEAR.

\*\*\*

## THE JUNKMAN AND OTHER POEMS

By RICHARD LE GALLIENNE  
(Doubleday and Co., 1921.)

MR. Le Gallienne offers, in this volume, a discouraging medley of commonplace verse and authentic music. Unfortunately, the commonplace greatly preponderates and one must search carefully for the indications of poetry. Mr. Le Gallienne's genius appears here and there almost hopelessly smothered under facility and banality. His authentic elixir is so diluted that the taste is flat. One realizes that Mr. Le Gallienne long ago gave up quality for quantity. Yet nothing that he may do, however laboured, however dull, can detract from the excellent merit of his best work. He—in this, much like Mr. Witter Bynner—dilutes a very real genius to such a point that it is almost unrecognizable. These two poets—American and English—seem to be constantly determined to extract from every idea and every emotion, as many poems and as many rhymes as is pos-



sible. They never neglect an opportunity. They seize on the slightest excuse to versify. They seem to have fore-sworn completely the faculty of selection.

One feels in reading the ballades and lyrics that make up "The Junkman" that most of this material was written at space rates.

It is a pity. For Mr. Le Gallienne has written good poetry and could have written better. He, like Andrew Lang, has dissipated and diluted into twenty volumes, a genius which, if concentrated into a small vessel, might have made wine heady enough to intoxicate posterity.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## Train Lost

BY WILLIAM GRIFFITH

"Too late,"  
The Train Master said,  
"Gates closed for the Six-thirteen."  
So I wait for the Six-thirty-six.  
And my heart that was ticking too slow  
For the Six-thirteen,  
Ticks on for the six-thirty-six;  
Ticks on,  
Ticks on,  
Behind time . . . perhaps . . . slowing down.  
Tick, tick.

Hush!

*Friend,  
Into the night  
Ahead,  
Who knows  
When the Last Train goes?*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

WE feel that an explanation is due our subscribers anent this double number of *The Double Dealer*. Stock excuses will not go. The war is over. There is no shortage of paper to-day. Printers are back on the job. The name of Burleson has gone into history.

Here are the facts: Our January issue should have been labeled February, in that it did not appear on the stands until January 7th. We commenced late in blissful ignorance of the difficulties that beset publishers. Once tardy, we found it impossible to make up for lost time. Each issue, seems, like a French clock, to have lost a day, until this cumulative delay proved a decided mechanical handicap. The American public demands its monthly periodicals in the month preceding that announced on their covers. The July number of *The Double Dealer* reached the distributors on July 11th. Thus, in order to overcome this difficulty, we deemed it expedient to consolidate the August and September issues, so making it possible to publish the October issue on or about September 20th.

If any of our patrons feel that they are not getting the full value of their subscription by this arrangement, we will willingly extend such subscriptions an additional month.

### THE DOUBLE DEALER FOR OCTOBER.

THE October issue offers, among other entertaining features, an article on the American language by John V. A. Weaver, author of the widely discussed "In American"; poems; an essay by Howard Mumford Jones, the noted Southern author; an appreciation of modern violinists by Arthur Symons; and an interesting variety of verse and prose by John McClure, Alfred Kreymborg, Stephen Ta Van, Maxwell Armfield, Oscar Williams, Jeannette Marks, Walter Yust, Richard LeGallienne, Louis Gilmore, Marx G. Sabel, Lafcadio Hearn, and others.



AN invitation is extended to patrons of Southern letters to communicate with us in regard to the improvement and enlargement of this magazine. Criticisms, suggestions, any constructive ideas, are sought. It has long been our belief that there must be persons sufficiently interested in the advancement of literature in the South, to offer a prize in their names through such a medium as this for the best short story and poem, respectively, published during the course of a year. We shall be pleased to get in touch with any man or woman in sympathy with this project.

BASIL THOMPSON  
JULIUS WEIS FRIEND,

*Editors.*

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

## THE IMMORTALS

ONE hears a deal of foolishness in regard to the immortality of works of art. Men otherwise quite sane grow lyric over the judgment of posterity. They assert confidently that a book or a play is a fine thing and will live, a sort of reverberation of the older dictum that Master Quagmire has lead a good life and will go to heaven. George Moore, with his tongue at least, slightly in his cheek, has declared that a fine sonnet dropt from an aeroplane in the Sahara Desert will be found and recognized, apparently if it be good enough. "Literature," says James Branch Cabell, "is a starveling cult kept alive by the literary" which suggests an order of spectacled male vestal virgins guarding the authentic fire of Lamb and Dickens and Villon and Dante against the encroachment of the Philistines. Yet it seems they quarrel over which spark to nurse, for I have heard one member of this "starveling cult" assert that Dickens was the greatest master of prose that ever wrote in English, whereas another brother declared to me that Dickens was simply a second-rate hack who wrote rather inferior novels. Numerous brilliant writers, notably Arthur Machen, have tried to analyze the ineffable quality which, superficial-

ity, subject-matter and mannerism aside, makes for essential permanence in literature. One is reminded of the worthies who watch a death-bed for the moment when the "soul" escapes.

The obvious answer to all this palaver about the permanence of Art and the immortality of its works is that nothing is immortal. If some strayed reveller of the heavens in the shape of a comet should collide with us tomorrow, to what pocket in the illimitable ether would the fame of Shakespeare's sonnets go winging?

More interesting it is to consider the quality of this *tentative* immortality. Certainly it is largely accidental. Antony presented Cleopatra with the library of Pergamos containing two hundred thousand volumes of the works of Greek authors. Says Remy de Gourmont. "Greek Literature in Didot's edition is contained in sixty-one volumes. Literature fared the same as an army which has been decimated. The dead are buried and the survivors become heroes."

Here is another view of immortality in letters. Since the invention of printing with its modern facilities, barring a cataclysm it is reasonable to suppose that practically everything written to-day will be preserved for centuries. Those works which contain rare quali-



ties only appreciable to discriminating intellects will continue to delight the few capable of tasting their flavor; but the great masses will continue to be thrilled by the same sort of stuff which thrills the masses today, only brought up to date. Is it reasonable to assume that the populace will change? Remember reading has been made democratic.

There is another fact for the sniper of prospective immortals to ponder. Let him consider the nature of the books, or for that matter, the crumbling statues and pictures which have survived and are vaunted immortal by us poor creatures of a moment. Can he sincerely subscribe to the "greatness" of some of the Latin poets? Let him compare the work of any columnist in the daily newspapers. The Laocoon atrocity, and the sculpture of any graveyard mechanic. Which suffers by comparison, a good Broadway review or the "Frogs" of Aristophanes? If you have really read the latter you will not be shocked by the juxtaposition. With open eyes let him regard the daubs of the primitive Italian painters and then tell me whether he can discover the greatness of feeling and touch which have been read into them. What about the armless statue called Venus di Milo? Does she represent the ultimate word in female beauty? Did her unknown chiseler ever intend that she should? And sacrilege! Was she ever intended to represent Venus and not Juno?

Outside the sanction of the schools which necessarily dubs great what survives, subject matter largely determines the "immortality" or the tentative immortality of works of art. Cabell says that in time the morality or immorality

of an artist's life becomes an inconsequential affair and only his work is important. Quite the reverse is true, however, of his work, if we are considering its mortal permanence—or better, its longevity. Surely it is because Bunyan pointed a moral rather than adorned a tale that he is known today. Why otherwise, is "The Vicar of Wakefield" included in every school curriculum? Or Walter Scott? Practically all fiction read in the schools has been chosen not for its literary value, but either for its obvious moral or its relative innocuousness to current codes.

On the other side of the picture, Boccaccio has persisted for his pornography. Smut aside, there has never been a drearier collection of tales than the Decameron offers. What of the Heptameron, and the later Latins, and Sterne and Rabelais and nearer today, "Mlle. de Maupin" and Paul de Koch? Hand on your heart, is it their literary style or the subjects they treat that make them read? Do readers appreciate the remarkable fluidity and color of Poe's style quite as much as the shudder and shiver he evokes? Whether morality, lasciviousness or sensation be the tag, it is subject matter which has been the embalming fluid in ninety-nine per cent of the world's classics. The literary judgment of posterity, then, resolves itself into a myth. Immortality or rather survival depends on the sanction of morality, that of the academy, (the two are almost the same). It depends on the work of art's moral appeal or its immoral appeal. But much more it depends on the book, statue, painting surviving natural accident and the caprice of men in power, or perhaps on

some absurd mouse overturning or not overturning a lighted candle.

The moral to all this verbiage is simple. Write to amuse yourself, paint to amuse yourself or leave pencil and easel alone. He who works for posterity is a fool as likely to be misunderstood by another generation of jackasses as by his own. If he craves an absurd immortality that he cannot personally experience, he will find a simple act like setting fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus or the bombing of a cathedral less laborious and a myriad times more effective.

## THE JELLYBEAN

**S**TORIED *Nouvelle Orleans*, city of caprice and originality, font of the quaint and the fantastic, has recently added to her much betufted turban another coveted feather. Though *Ma'mselle Nouvelle Orleans*, famous for her whims and piquancies, has got in the past many a gaudier plume, none, I believe, surpasses for sheer oddity this latest trophy. First to discover the highball (*ruffignac*), namer and concocter of the now almost legendary cocktail, the much "brewted" gin fizz, the inimitable sazerac, and various and sundry liqueurs and potations (alas for yesterday); mistress of cuisine; mother of the "blues," the shimmy-sha-wobble, and jazz; first also to dub her hard-boiled brethren hoodlums—*Ma'mselle Nouvelle Orleans* now comes forth, elects and names the jellybean. What means this strange appellation? Our

ever alert American humorists from 'Gene Field and George Ade to Ring Lardner and Johnny Weaver seem somehow totally unaware of this remarkable discovery, the honor of which, I am told, goes to a minion of the local press. Though hearkening back some several years, the exact date of its acception remains doubtful.

Jellybean, *Americano* for *genus gelibeanum*, neuter as you note, is derived from the adjective *gelus*, that is, soft, mucilaginous, and *beanum* or *beanus*, in the masculine declension, that is, head, block, or, in this instance, bean. *Ergo*, soft-head, jellybean.

*Genus gelibeanum*, blood brother to the flapper, cousin germane to the vamp, despised butt of cop, hoodlum and soda jerker, is a distinct and interesting species of jejune America. He is perhaps best described in his mental and physical make-up, for his morals like his sex are but vaguely defined. Mentally we discover him a potential moron, the mind located somewhere in the vicinity of belt and breeches. Physically his dimensions vary between that of the robustious gum-drop (who, by the by, is fast obscuring the flapper in these parts) and the anaemic counter-jumper.

His natural habitat is the entrance to the soft drink emporium or corner drug store, Main Street, America. There he is to be found in flocks, coveys or pairs as the exigency warrants, peering, grinning, or staring vacuously at the passers in and out, trying his very deucedest to look the man-about-town. A devilish wicked fellow he would be thought, a rake with the skirted of the species. His secret ambition one glimpses in his ridiculous attempt at the

ancient art of ogling. However, my friend, the jellybean is not in any sense a naughty boy. He is at once mild, harmless and quesome, exhibiting a *naiveté* that in these "sophisticated days" is astounding. One wonders from what stock he stems. Of course, being a prohibition, post-war product, his age seldom exceeding nineteen summers, much in him may be condoned. His viriler elder brother, long since convalesced from the "late unpleasantness" will have none of him. He begets naught but contempt from his subtler, maturer sister. He is never known to have puffed a stogie. His favorite beverage is chocolate ice cream soda with a dash of peppermint essence for kick. His heroes are Wallace Reid and the village ladies' man. His pseudo-Kuppenheimer hand-me-downs seem never quite to fit him about neck and buttocks. He neatly pins his *chapeau de feutre* to prevent mussing a carefully bandolined mop. His breeches are invariably abbreviated above and below, accentuating hinder parts, which, owing to this congestion, take on a decidedly plus aspect. Mauve or pea-green knitted tie, *crepe-de-chine* shirt, frat pin, and tannish brogues complete his sartorial fixtures. He is a puppy, a petter, a percy-boy, and a popinjay all in one—and he isn't. He is something more. He is a jellybean.

But don't waste your pity on him. Nature has been very good to him. He neither needs nor does he look for pity. He possesses that "certain something" which renders him more or less immune to hostile criticism. He is tender, bold, distraught, cute, callow and self-sufficient. I find myself waxing effusive. The sub-

ject is indeed absorbing. It cannot be treated meagerly. It needs air and space and time.

But if this fillip has whetted your appetite and you must have more of the stuff I beg to refer you to three forthcoming volumes on the subject which I have had the rare privilege of reading in proof. The first, "The Jellybean: His Meaning and Menace," by Beatricks Freudfax, author of "Advice to the Gumdrops," though delectable in spots, leaves me quite cold. The second, "The Evolution of the Bean," by Doctor Frank Cocci, you will find infinitely more satisfactory. The third, "Why Am I?" by Clarence Creme de Cocoa, an excellent bit of psychoanalysis, positively delights me. Clarence admits in his preface that he belongs to that steadily increasing class of young humanity now known to you as *genus gelibeantum*. His connotations on the text of Dr. Cocci's tome, which it appears he too read in manuscript, are remarkable in their penetration. Besides a charming appendix devoted to a resumé of his reasons for existence, the young author has compiled an excellent glossary of jellybeanisms. The whole book is intriguing. A superb work! And, mind you, these gifted writers are all local *litterati*. Another feather in our cap!

Ah, *Ma'mselle Nouvelle Orleans*, your fame is now assured. Though conquistador, pirate, buccaneer, gentleman duelist, beautiful quadroon, *ruffignac*, gin fizz and cocktail have seen their day and vanished, the jellybean is still yours and bids fair so to remain, a growing monument to your perspicacity, Aphrodite-like, defying oblivion.

Oscar, the curtain!



## LO! THE CRITICS

**N**EVER do I pick up a piece of literary criticism without hope that at last I shall find one critic without a whine in him. But I am always, soon or late, disappointed. Of all classes, critics, if you believe them, form the one which is the most sinned against. Pages of criticism entertain me no longer, but drum into my consciousness only another and another: "Lo! I, the Critic, have been sinned against! See, here! Or there! Just see how I have been sinned against!"

I feel violent. I have been thinking of those critics who, directly or by indirection, by condemnation or by praise, show under what circumstances only and by what method, masterpieces are written. I have been meditating upon a whole string of critics, touching back to Mathew Arnold, who elected himself to a kind of godhead; skirting along by Brander Mathews, cool, dictatorial school master; William Lyon Phelps, amiable and perhaps afraid of the growing world; Van Wyck Brooks, who knows best, with God, the limitations of the mind of New England Victorians and Mark Twain; J. C. Powys, lost soul wandering about in his own obscurity; Stuart P. Sherman, anti-bigot, of liberal intolerance; John Erskine and Bliss Perry, dusks of a departing day; and a sprinkling of professors and editors of literary pages who "earn a little bitter bread by the condemnation of trash which they do not read, and the praise of excellence which they do not understand." I see them rolling about in their chairs with the ponderous gravity

of a Dr. Johnson. "Hector of the glancing helm hath set himself to say somewhat." I hear them cough, see them look wise, roll their eyes, just before they deliver of themselves wisdom to make Olympus quake. They are remembered, George Moore reminds us, by what they fail to understand. Whatever the dust they raise in ingratiating apologies, they *do* in the end act like little gods who see no reason, except for argument's sake, in getting themselves out of the way to let humanity judge.

They insist they seek diligently after the Truth. The bother is they are not *always* after it, but are always *finding* it, and taking time out to put what they've found in indelible black for the ages. They make certain the truth is fresh. It's the only way to sell their book or article. And once they've found their saleable truth, they busy themselves caulking up its leaky sides, and neglect to hunt any longer. For them at least, for this one thesis of theirs at least, truth is found. There remains only the business of generously forcing that truth on other folks, and the subsequent hunt for another fresh truth to put in their next contribution.

How many a poem, novel and play I have enjoyed heartily, only one day to find an "acknowledged" critic condemn it because this wasn't done, or because that wasn't done; because the author hadn't "the world view"; because he wasn't analytical enough, because he was too analytical; because he suffers a "blind-side" peculiarly evident to this or that particular critic; because he is too sensual, because he is not sensual enough; because he lacks the "scientific



spirit", because he's got more than his share of it. One-eyed giants! They used to disconcert me. But no more. Once I had a friend who could haul about historical dates by the scruff of the neck and with an assurance and an arrogance almost incredible. He amazed me. He awed me. I felt humble in his presence. Until one day I checked up some of his dates, and found most of them wrong! We can't check up the "historical dates" of the literary-critics. Critics call them standards. Mine are no more right than yours and yours are no more right than mine. Yet we are told that "without standards we critically perish." According to critics, all but the Critical Cult have perished anyway. Let us continue to perish then, cheerily O! rather than adopt for our standards those which hot-house professors and artists turned priests select for general consumption.

Huneker wrote somewhere that the only criticism of music is the playing thereof. The only criticism of a book, I suppose, is the reading thereof. And whether a book is good for me or you depends on how it *reads* to me or you and not on its appeal to Professor Tom or Dick.

Don't misunderstand. Criticism is not a synonym for condemnation. I'm not advocating New England conservatism or insisting on "constructive criticism." That would be plagiarizing schoolmarms and U. S. senators. I'm urging "*No faith at all in critics!*" Not even in me—which shows my superior tolerance, God save my soul! Let nobody throw critical pepper in your eyes! "The prime office of criticism," we are told, "is to make our absorption and our

enjoyment of things that feed the mind as aware of itself as possible." I grant the professional critic, with reluctance and reservations, that one office. But he must be careful to walk more circumspectly than I am walking, this one violent moment. He must walk humbly. And he must never cry "Verboten! Verboten!" to anything.

Taste is an individual matter. My taste is mine, your taste is yours, and neither belongs to the critic. It is full of mystery, taste is. Art is full of mystery, too. And if the artist himself often cannot and does not recognize art when he sees it, if the making of his own masterpiece is so much a mystery even to him, where under God's high heaven do the critics get their omniscience? "This is as it may turn out," says the modest Artist, busily writing; "Here's looking at you!" "Fudge!" cries the modest Critic; "Here's *how!*"

It ought to give the Critic pause when a Pater, in a moment of dusting off his own offenses, could write: "Critical efforts to limit art *a priori*... are always liable to be discredited by the facts of the artistic production." It ought to help the critic understand that his "cause to effect" and his "effect to cause" conclusions are of importance only because they may be entertaining, and entertaining chiefly because they give us something else to doubt.

Read your play or your novel or your poem, if you like it, and be damned to the critics! And the critics be damned! The world is full of buzzing bees who thrive on beautiful flowers; who suck them dry and advise the plant how the flowers could have been fashioned more

to their taste. But the world, too, is full of gardeners who resent their lepidopteral cheek.

to assail or worry their heads about any government either because it is tyrannical or because it is ridiculous.

Dantes, Miltons and Shelleys are rare in more ways than one.

## POLITICS AND THE ARTIST

The despots of Italy, those infamous hyenas who with good reason feared the impact of a righteous dagger at all moments, would have nobody close to their persons but men of letters, artists and scholars, jugglers and mountebanks.

One cannot be sure that the commentary on this practice is that the men of letters were cowardly rogues. It may be that the despots believed so, but most likely the truth of the matter is that they relied on the artist's notorious indifference to political affairs. Ezzelino, the child of hell, could have had no better crony than a ballad-maker. It was nothing to poets and peddlers of tales that this duke or that was extremely severe. If His Excellency threw peasants to the dogs the men of letters, artists and scholars were not likely to stab him for it, so long as the dinner was good. Politics was nothing to them.

And politics is very little to them now. It is a safe wager that four out of five artists in America—in literature, music and painting—never vote. The men of letters and artists of today realize as well as those of the Renaissance that politics, all round the circle, is a yowling farce. They neither vote nor influence votes. They are as oblivious of politics as dormice and are not likely

## WHEREIN WE YAWN

EVERY day, almost every hour, the editorial sanctum of this magazine admits various persons who very flatteringly ask my professional advice and seek information. Noticeably scattered among the horde of callers are young gentlemen and ladies from the newspapers. Frequently they are doing "assignments," and for the convenience of their articles, they entreat me from behind their horn-rimmed spectacles to avow that this pleasant old planet is becoming a fitter place to live in, and that mankind is fighting the battle with a more marked discrimination of his five senses.

These well intentioned young hopefuls would have me admit that the public taste is improving. Frankly, I cannot endorse their view. I consider that public taste is as ever invariably shifting, especially since the recent *kriegspiel*, and the shift seems to me to be not for the better.

To test my conviction I have but to walk the highways of a great American metropolis and observe the antics of the mob. What do I find? Men drinking non-alcoholic beer which savors of soapy carbonated water; reading magazines whose covers feature scantily at-

tired femininity and whose contents edify us with sex matter termed "snap-py" or "saucy"; or gloating over still other periodicals which make no pretense to being anything but lewd and succeed by virtue of their sincerity; reading—and swallowing whole—advertisements of moving picture trusts which talk about "The Art of the Silent Drama" and the cost (in millions) of the production; smoking cigarettes bearing the crest of the Duke of Connaught, which are made in Virginia and cannot be found outside these United States; filling themselves in expensive restaurants where the food is bad and the service worse, leaning up against the ruins of old bars and imbibing sticky syrups for the conviviality of it—

And women, I find, in ridiculous gowns which reveal their nudity, often unlovely to behold; who daub them-

selves to the point where the purpose of artifice becomes meaningless; who line up at the polls and evince their ignorance of public matters (an ignorance even more astounding than the ignorance of the male); who dance in public, jowl to jowl, with men to whom they have only just been presented, but who become incensed when an old friend of the family endeavors to "hold hands" in the conservatory; who dabble in art for no other reason than that they have good servants to manage their affairs; and so on, and so on.

And when I have made these casual observations, is it probable that my faith in the public taste is strengthened? I am more inclined to believe that the bourgeois flavor which the populace insists upon will never vanish, and to agree with one of my colleagues who avers that our very civilization is built upon mediocrity.

I have no very great desire to make myself agreeable to you, Caesar, nor to know whether your complexion is light or dark.

—Catullus.

# The Chemise of Margarita Pareja

BY LAFCADIO HEARN.

IT is not improbable that some of my readers may have often heard the old women of Lima exclaim, when complaining of the high price of an article:

"What?—why that is dearer than the chemise of Margarita Pareja!"

I should have sought hard to find out who this Margarita Pareja was, whose chemise is so famous, had I not stumbled across an article written by Don Ildefonso Antonio Bermejo, author of a famous work on Paraguay, who, although he touches but very lightly upon the subject of the girl and her chemise, nevertheless has enabled me to solve the riddle, and to bring to light the facts of the story you are going to read.

## I.

Margarita Pareja lived in 1776, or thereabouts; and was the most beloved and petted daughter of Don Raimundo Pareja, gentleman of Santiago, and collector-general of Callao.

The girl belonged to that class of Lima beauties whose charms would captivate the very devil himself, and make him cross himself and even drive him to distraction.

About that time there arrived from Spain a gallant youth named Don Luis de Alcazar. He had a rich bachelor uncle in Lima, an old-fashioned Aragonese, exceedingly haughty, and unspeakably proud of his ancestry.

It is reasonable to suppose that while

awaiting the chance to inherit from his uncle, Luis lived as poorly as a church mouse, and was continually haunted by melancholy. When I say that his smallest requirements were obtained upon credit, to be paid for as soon as he could mend his fortune, I believe that I state his condition with sufficient truthfulness.

On the occasion of the procession of Santa Rosa, Alcazar first saw the beautiful Margarita. The girl caught his eye and ensnared his heart. He presented her with a bunch of flowers; and although she responded neither by a direct yes or no, she allowed it to be inferred by her smiles and other artifices of the feminine arsenal that the lad was by no means displeasing to her. The truth, as I should confess it, is that they fell over head and ears in love with each other.

As the lovers forgot there was such a thing as arithmetic, Don Luis never dreamed that his present poverty could be any obstacle to the success of his love affair. He called upon Margarita's father, and without any preamble whatever boldly demanded the hand of his daughter.

Don Raimundo did not entertain the petition favorably; and dismissed the postulant with many elaborate courtesies, observing that Margarita was still too much of a child to think of marriage, and that in spite of her eighteen summers she was still attached to her dolls.

But that was not the true cause of



the refusal. The fact was that Don Raimundo did not care to become the father-in-law of a *pobreton* (poor devil); and he said as much in confidence to one of his friends, who went directly with the tale to Don Honorato, as the proud Aragonese uncle was named. The latter, who was haughtier than the Cid himself, bounded with rage at the news, and cried: "What! Insult my nephew! Many would be only too happy to have a chance of an alliance with that boy;—than whom there is not a finer lad in all Lima. The insolence of the low-born clown alone betrays itself in such a fashion as this. But, after all, what has this miserable, pitiful *collectorcillo* to do with me?"

Margarita, who was born a century before her time, suddenly became as hysterical as a maiden of our own era; she sobbed and pulled out her hair and fainted; and if she did not threaten to poison herself, it was because matches had not yet been invented.

Margarita lost her rosiness, and grew visibly thinner and weaker day by day; talked about becoming a nun, and absolutely refused to listen to reason. She would cry *O de Luis o de Dios!* (either Luis or God) every time the hysterics came on, which was very often. The Santiago caballero became finally much alarmed, and called in doctors and nurses—all of whom swore that the girl was going into consumption, and that the only medicine which could save her was not sold in apothecaries' shops.

"Either marry her to the lad she loves or make her coffin ready!" Such was the doctor's ultimatum.

So Don Raimundo, remembering only that he was a father, rushed without hat

or cloak to the residence of Don Honorato and said to him:

"I have come to beg your consent to the marriage of your nephew with Margarita tomorrow morning; for otherwise the girl will die."

"Oh, utterly impossible! utterly, utterly impossible!!" ironically responded the uncle. "My nephew is only a poor devil, and the man you must seek for your daughter's husband is a rich man, a man of money, a man of large resources!"

The dialogue was a stormy one. The more Don Raimundo supplicated, the more Don Honorato seemed to harden his heart; and both were about to retire from the scene, when Don Luis ventured to break in upon the discussion, saying:

"But, uncle, it is not Christianlike to kill those who have done no wrong."

"Indeed! Am I to understand that you wish to sacrifice yourself for that girl's sake?"

"With all my heart and soul, Uncle y Señor."

"Very well, boy; I consent, since it seems to give you pleasure; but only upon one condition, and that is this: Don Raimundo must swear to me upon the Sacred Host that he will not present his daughter with one single *ochavo*, nor bequeath her in his will even so much as a *real*."

This renewed the quarrel in a new form.

"But, man," cried Don Raimundo, "my daughter has a dowry of twenty thousand duros!"

"We renounce the dowry. The girl must come to the house of her husband with nothing but her shift on."



"At least permit me to marry her with some little formality—her trousseau and furniture and—"

"No, sir—not so much as a pin. If you do not like my terms, renounce them, and let the little one die!"

"But, Don Honorato, try to be reasonable. My daughter must at least have a chemise, in the way of wedding apparel."

"Well, I will yield this point, lest you might think me obstinate. I consent that you give her a bridal chemise; and now let us end the discussion."

Don Raimundo and Don Honorato rode to San Francisco at daybreak next morning; and while kneeling at mass during the elevation of the Host, the former swore according to the compact:

"I swear not to give my daughter anything except the bridal chemise. May

God judge me if I perjure myself."

## II.

And Don Raimundo Pareja kept his oath to the letter; for neither during his life nor at his death did he ever afterward give his daughter anything worth a *maravedi*.

The Flemish laces which adorned the bridal chemise cost two thousand seven hundred duros, according to Bermejo, who seems to have copied the statement from the *Relaciones Secretas* of Ulloa and Don Jorge Juan.

Item, the string which confined the chemise at the neck was a chain of brilliants valued at thirty thousand morlas-coes.

Assuredly, Margarita Pareja's chemise deserved its fame.

Lima, 1879.

## The Moon's Not Always Beautiful

BY EDWARD SAPIR.

The moon's not always beautiful,  
The snow's not always white,  
I've seen the sun at a very noon  
Cower in cloud-light.

This must be why a golden girl  
Whose face is pure song  
Can sometimes clench a savage fist  
And sing a note wrong.

This must be why a silver girl  
Whose face is a very moon  
Can sometimes savagely grow dark  
And blow a monsoon.

# The Laugh

BY JULIAN KILMAN.

**B**EN NEAR'S laugh began with a series of deep-lunged, Gargantuan Ho-Ho-Ho's and in its beginning was almost infectious. But as the cachinnations continued, the thin quality that crept into the timbre of the voice gave to a discerning ear the hint of an uneasy mind. This ripened into certitude as, the tongue commencing to clutter and the throat ceasing to function, the laugh degenerated into mere mouthings, with the laugher himself doubled up in an apparent access of soundless mirth. Some there were in the little hamlet of Ovid who honestly enjoyed the spectacle of Ben in his risibilities; others were tolerantly amused; while a third and more sensitive group frankly shuddered.

The off-spring of a Nicholas County woman and an exotic sloe-black eyed French Canadian who years before had incidentally drifted into Ovid and as incidentally drifted out again, Ben Near had come to be an institution. The man was slightly less than two hundred pounds in weight, toed in excessively, and had hair so thin and light that his scalp was practically bare. From the father he had inherited his black eyes; from the mother his fair skin.

The methods of causing Ben to perpetrate this laugh were various. That involving least circumlocution was merely to whack him unexpectedly on the back. This was a procedure much in favor with Adam Zavitz, a rustic exemplar of Rabelaisian humor, who re-

sided up the river just beyond the Fullmer farm where Ben made his home.

The method that gave evidence of greatest finesse—and one much in vogue with the school-boys—was to make a sketch of two figures, man and woman, walking side by side. The art employed needed to be but the most rudimentary. What particularly intrigued Ben were the letters "B E N and M A R Y" which the artist never failed to append, the idea being that it was a representation of Ben and a supposititious wife out for a stroll. As Ben was unmarried, the recondite inference never failed to send him off into peals of laughter. Workmen in the fields half a mile away, hearing the tumult of Ben's laugh, would straighten their tired backs and exclaim: "Someone's showed a picture to Ben," or "That's Adam Zavitz coddin' with Ben. Gosh A'mighty, ain't that a laugh for you!"

Most Ovidians called Ben a half-wit. Others there were who had doubts as to the entirety of Ben's affliction. On occasions he played the *enfant terrible*, his brain functioning in a strikingly direct manner. He was lazy and many wondered at the toleration of him by John Fullmer, a hard-headed farmer who for years had permitted Ben to sleep in his barn, even though the big fellow did only such labor about the premises as he was actually unable to avoid.

It goes without saying that Ben was the object of many rude pastoral pleas-

antries. The most extravagant of these was Ben's induced courtship of Adam Zavitz's seventeen-year-old brother habited as a young woman. For six weeks almost nightly the hideous travesty continued, with the countryside looking on. It finally culminated one evening in the actual ceremony of marriage. This typically bucolic affair was followed by a law-suit in which Ben, as plaintiff sued the Zavitz brothers for \$10,000 damages to his wounded sensibilities. For some time the attorneys gravely had tried the case (destined to become a local *cause celebre*) when the old Judge, suddenly struck by the absurdity of the matter and more than half suspecting the lawyers of lending themselves to the comedy, sharply reprimanded them and threw it out of court.

Never in all the thirty-five years of Ben's existence had he exhibited any ugliness of temper. Hence, at the conclusion of the mock trial, it was no surprise when Adam Zavitz, ex-defendant strode up to Ben Near, ex-plaintiff, standing on the court house steps, slapped him on the back, and then beginning with the Ho-Ho's laughed with him through to the end. Zavitz's native genius for mimicry, together with long practice in imitating Ben's laugh, including the very throat cluckings and body contortions, had made his performance a thing of ghastly perfection.

That same evening in the dusk as Ben was returning from the court house, Fullmer overtook him with the buckboard. He drew up and motioned Ben to jump in.

"Well," he began, grimly. "You only played into Zavitz's hands by letting them set you up to that trial."

"I know, I know," mumbled Ben, with his unduly mobile lips. "I only played into their hands; that's it; played into their hands."

"Next time you'll follow my advice," said Fullmer, patiently.

"That's right, Fullmer. I'll follow your advice."

"You see, Ben," went on the farmer. "You ain't as bright as most folks. You might as well face the fact."

"Yes," agreed Ben. "They're too sharp for me, now ain't they?"

"That's what I said."

"Yes, that's it; too sharp for me—too sharp for me—too sharp—"

"Well, great heavens!" finally burst from Fullmer. "You've said it enough."

"That's right, Fullmer I'll stop."

The other lapsed into silence. Presently he said: "I'll want you to work pretty soon with the Teal boys over in that field of rye."

"I—I—got to go to the village pretty regular," said Ben.

"What for?"

"To get my mail. That mail carrier, he won't bring it. He'll forget it, Fullmer."

"Your mail! Why, switch it all, Ben, you don't get any mail. When did you ever get any mail?"

"Last spring I got a letter," defended Ben.

"A printed circular! Won't you ever learn? If I hadn't a-stopped you, you'd a-sent \$10 to that scalawag on his promise to get you a wife by advertisement. Adam Zavitz sent them fakirs your name."

Again there came a silence.

"Zavitz's carryin' the thing too far," muttered the farmer to himself. "It's



got to stop."

"Yes," said Ben. "It's got to stop."

The farmer grunted. "I've let you stay in my barn for more than six years; and as long as you're willing to work, I'm willing to let you stay. But you're loafing considerably of late. Now I want you to turn in and help. The first thing I want you to do is to kill off the rats in the barn. Yesterday I noticed they'd chewed the top half off Bess' new yoke."

Ben betrayed quick interest.

"That's right. I can't hardly sleep for them runnin' around and rattlin' things. I'll set the traps, Fullmer, first thing."

Next day it rained and Ben spent his time adjusting the steel rat traps. Also in strategic places he left pieces of cheese doctored with rat poison they gave him in the house. One large chunk he placed near the foot of the steps that led to the harness-room. From a box just inside the door, with the patience and immobility of an Oriental, Ben watched that bait. After more than an hour passed, there came a squeak and the watcher detected in the gloom of the barn a rat. It passed one of the open-jawed traps and approached the cheese which it nibbled slightly; then it squealed and ran back; came up again, with trailing tail; listened a moment, flicking its ears suspiciously; and finally went voraciously at the poisoned cheese. In two minutes it was dead.

Suddenly the air was filled with Ho-Ho's of Ben's laugh.

The door of the barn opened. "What you laughing at?" demanded the farmer, stamping in out of the rain.

Ben indicated the dead rodent.

"Humph! He ate some of the poison, I reckon," said Fullmer.

"Yes," assented Ben, eagerly. "He ate some of the poison—and he's dead. He ate some of the poison—and he's dead. He ate—"

"Come on into the house," impatiently broke in the farmer, "or you'll be eating it yourself."

Later that evening Adam Zavitz carrying a lantern made his way along the road leading to Ovid. When opposite the Fullmer place the door opened and Fullmer cried out: "I want to see you a few minutes."

Zavitz came in. He was a big, burly fellow, with a shock of reddish hair and a beefy face. Fullmer motioned him to a chair. Fullmer's wife was bustling about with her supper dishes. She filled a pail with fresh cider and tendered it to Ben who took it and went to the barn without a word. Zavitz remained silent, waiting for Fullmer to speak. The two farmers never had been friendly, and the younger man now sensed that his neighbor had some complaint to make. He thought it might be about that ditch leading away from the swamp.

Not until his wife disappeared into the kitchen with the last of the dishes did the older man speak. Then he said bluntly:

"You've got to stop this fooling with Ben."

"Oh, ho, that's it," breathed Zavitz. "Well," he said, aloud, "What's the harm."

"There ain't any in particular" went on Fullmer, in moderate voice, "and neither is there any good. But that ain't the point. I'm just telling you



that I want it stopped."

Zavitz shifted in his chair. He looked ugly.

"What's it to you anyways?"

"I'm just plain making it my business."

"And if I don't see fit to quit?"

Fullmer was short in stature and considerably older than his visitor. He squared himself in front of Zavitz.

"Ben's a fool. He can't fight. You know that. And I suppose I'm too small and old to lick you. You know that, too. So I'm just asking you as a man to quit it."

Zavitz stood up. "All through?" he asked, sneeringly.

Fullmer's patience was completely exhausted. He flung open the door.

"You can get out of the house," he shouted.

About one o'clock in the morning, when the young farmer, slightly under the influence of liquor, was returning home from the village, he observed a light in the Fullmer barn. This he knew belonged to Ben who was in the habit of sitting up late. Stumblingly he made his way thither.

Ben was seated on a box, apparently in a brown study; three rats were huddled on the floor before him; a pail of cider stood at hand. From this he took a drink.

"Are they dead?" asked Zavitz.

"Yes," answered Ben.

Presently his gaze switched to Zavitz who stood with wobbling uncertainty. The young farmer did not observe Ben's scrutiny; his attention was still fastened on the dead rodents.

Neither did he observe that Ben stealthily dropped something into the pail of cider. It was the contents of a package of rat poison.

"Give me some cider," Zavitz presently demanded.

The half-wit handed over the pail.

Spreading his legs to steady himself, Zavitz elevated the pail to his lips. He opened his mouth.

Over the rim of the pail he happened to catch sight of the sloe-black eyes of the big half-wit. These were wide-open, fixed on him in an extraordinary, fascinated stare.

Zavitz lowered the pail.

"Wash matter with you you G——d—— fool?" he said.

Then, as he pitched slightly, he raised the pail once more and drank deep.

Ben's face—even the scalp visible through the meager hair—reddened. He began to laugh, swaying from side to side. His deep-lunged Ho-Ho's rocked the air.

And Zavitz, from sheer habit, spacing his cachinnations to a nicety, laughed in unison with the half-wit. Their horrid din filled the mid-night. But in a moment the poison took effect. Zavitz slipped to the floor, his face contorted with pain, his hands gripping his stomach. He died miserably.

Ben kept on laughing.

Half a mile away a load of merry-makers were returning from a dance. To their ears had come the clamor of two men, laughing.

"By God!" exclaimed the driver. "If that ain't Adam Zavitz up there at this time o' night, coddin' Ben Near."

# Two Poems

BY GLENN WARD DRESBACH.

## CALM NEAR THE DESERT.

Worn hills all stilled with sun reach into haze  
That is the dust of opals thinly spread  
On shadowed robes of distance where the days  
Move out majestically to join their dead.  
The spears of bunch-grass glint, and here and there  
A cliff-face stares, scarred, questioning and proud.  
A lizard, swooned in passion of the glare,  
Forgets the hawk dazed in a cage of cloud.

The hunter and the hunted in such sun  
And in such silence have not will to stir.  
In vastness, awed awhile they are as one,  
Frail changing things where days are as they were  
When first a questioning cliff-face deep with scars  
Saw through the haze the questioning eyes of stars.

## CONTRADICTION.

Each day hurt dreams insisted  
That walls be built about  
Their place that no invader  
Might come and drive them out.

Now each day dreams are fading,  
Where many a shadow falls.  
They have not strength to conquer  
Their own unconquered walls.

And each day dreams are crying,  
"O, for a conquest vain  
If it must be, but conquest  
To thrill or hurt again!"

# Arthur Symons and the Puritans

BY HOWARD MUMFORD JONES.

IT is hard to say why the poetry of Arthur Symons has never received the recognition it deserves. He is not a "popular" writer, dwelling rather nearer the difficult air of the iced mountain's top than do the bards whom the Great American Public delighteth to honor. Of course, he wrote *London Nights*, that pernicious volume containing *Bianca*, a poem which Mr. William Morton Payne found too indecent to quote in the chaste columns of the old *Dial*. But the society for immortalizing literature, which raised *Jurgen* to eternal fame, has not yet fallen upon the *Collected Poems* of Symons (though they have been out since 1901), why, only the reader of Mencken's exposé of the eccentricity of the censor can guess, and they continue to be for sale with much that he has written since.

It is easy to understand why Symons will never be read except by those who care tremendously for the processes of art itself, but it is inexplicable why he has been ignored by the critics and historians of the modern poetic movement. A few reviews in American magazines, all unintelligent, save one by Padraic Colum; a forgotten essay by Benjamin De Casseres buried in heaven knows what deceased periodical; a solemn denunciation in the *Shelburne Essays*—this is the sum of American criticism. Mr. Paul Elmer More refers delicately to Symons' poetry as "a waste of shame"; he writes that Symons' themes are "the ambiguities and

unclean curiosities of a swaying will," whatever that means. "There are things," he continues, "it were good for a man, even for a decent poet, not to have written." These gems should be carved over the doors of our Carnegie libraries.

Having thus called for water and washed his hands, the veiled prophet of Shelburne dismisses "the only genuine and adequate representative in English of that widespread condition which we call decadence" with a lofty moral admonition to go get a "simple delight in nature." The spectacle of Arthur Symons weaving a daisy chain with infantile glee is one to which only the pencil of Max Beerbohm can do justice. One can merely point to the Sophoclean irony of the motto on the Shelburnian title page: "Before we can have an American art, there must be an American criticism."

Well, the decadence is over. Symons never took it very seriously, but he took his art with tremendous seriousness, so that his work is the only considerable body of poetry, which remains to us, out of that far-off time. One grows weary of hearing Dowson's *Cynara* quoted by the young, there is so much more in Symons and so little in Dowson. The cold, pale perfection of that lyric, Symons, it is true, never quite achieves; there is a resignation in Dowson which he never attains; but he has written not one, but a dozen, comparable poems, excursions into the world



of weariness and satiety which Dowson found so decorative. Dowson has but two moods: a despairing praise of virginity, a despairing renunciation, but one has only to turn over the pages of *Amoris Victima* to find a psychology of sex amazing in its penetration, in its complexity, in the sheer, sad music that the unadorned lines evoke.

Symons is the most substantial of the decadents because his soul is truly Latin and because he has behind him, as Padraic Colum said, the whole European background. With the rest one feels that decadence is an amusing game, but with Symons it is a creed of art. *The Sphinx* (which is, except for *Reading Gaol*, the only original poem that Oscar Wilde ever wrote) is a triumph of mechanical ingenuity and cold, hard, ungenerous composition. It is *Salammbo* without the story. But it never becomes anything else than a piece of mechanical ingenuity, because the idea behind the poem was for Wilde as decorative as the poem itself. Symons has done his *Sphinx*; it is called *Chimaera*, and he got it out of Baudelaire, just as Wilde did, and it is not so good a poem. But Symons has also written verses about Arques, Dieppe, Venice, Madrid, Paris, Antwerp—cities over which he pours the lavender waters of his prose. He has written poems about Chopin and Watteau and the ballet and Rameau and after hearing Madame Dolmetsch play the lute. He has translated Sophocles and D'Annunzio, Calderon and Mallarmé, Heine and the *Pleiade*. When in addition one remembers that he has written luminous criticism on everything from Elizabethan drama to the Russian dancers, one learns to distinguish genuine aestheticism from the

brass imitation of it which the dear public likes to accept. It is a pity that Hunecker did not explore the soul of Symons.

Aestheticism with Symons is not a pose, but a philosophy, which he calls symbolism, a name that frightens many people away. Because it is a philosophy, he did the decadent themes better on the whole than anybody else ever did them in English. One turns, for instance, to the section in the *Collected Poems* which contains what he wishes to preserve of *London Nights*. Just preceding it one will find a poem called *For a Picture of Watteau*, which ends:

"Light loves that woke with spring  
This autumn afternoon  
Beholds meandering,  
Still, to the strains of spring.

Your dancing feet are faint,  
Lovers; the air recedes  
Into a sighing plaint,  
Faint, as your loves are faint.

It is the end, the end,  
The dance of love's decease.  
Feign no more now, fair friend!  
It is the end, the end."

This is almost Verlaine and water, but not quite, for there is something else here—that delicate corruption of the spirit, the infinite grace, the ironic malice, which informed the manners of the Regency. For we must not forget that the world of Watteau was a world in which innocence was the last thrill, regret the deepest emotion, a world that had the European background as Wilde and the rest did not. *For a Picture of Watteau* is a fit prelude to a discussion of *London Nights*.

There is nothing very naughty before it, although just afterwards the Philis.

tine may gloat over the Violets and the Biancas which this Catullus sings. Indeed, there is little before this part of the *Poems* that is mature, except perhaps *Javanese Dancers*:

"Twitched strings, the clang of metal, beaten drums,  
Dull, shrill, continuous, disquieting;  
And now the stealthy dancer comes  
Undulantly with cat-like steps that cling.

Smiling between her painted lids a smile,  
Motionless, unintelligible, she twines  
Her fingers into mazy lines,  
The scarves across her fingers twine the while.

One, two, three, four glide forth, and, to and fro,  
Delicately and imperceptibly,  
Now swaying gently in a row,  
Now interthreading slow and rhythmically.

Still with fixed eyes, monotonously still,  
Mysteriously, with smiles inanimate,  
With lingering feet that undulate,  
With sinuous fingers, spectral hands that thrill

In measure while the gnats of music whirr,  
The little amber-colored dancers move,  
Like painted idols seen to stir  
By the idolaters in a magic grove."

This is very good, although Symons would not write the last line nowadays, but it suffers, like much of the early work, from a feverish concern over the *not juste*, and the disillusion, too, in *Silhouettes* is often too much like Heine and too little like Arthur Symons. But the poem on the Watteau picture, itself not as good as *Javanese Dancers*, is a better introduction to Symons. It is the door by which Symons entered the decadence, bringing with him the exquisite polish, the refined malice, the superb condescension of the Duc de Richelieu.

Mr. Paul Elmer Moore accuses Symons of wearying first of the flesh and then of the delights of the soul; after this, he says, the poet passes into disillusion which is itself illusion. I do not precisely understand all this jugglery of Mr. More's. That critic seems to me to preach about the most disastrous disillusion in the world, and he calls it joy, which is the more amazing. But it would be truer, I think, to say that Symons was never under the illusion of the loves of the flesh or of the spirit either. When he came to write of things sexual he did not, for instance, write with the infinite gusto of that blustering giant, Swinburne; not yet like a nasty little boy as Wilde often did; nor yet with the feminine and timid accuracy of the virginal Dowson. He wrote, instead, with perfect sincerity, but at the same time with the half-disdainful manner of a fine gentleman. He wrote also like a psychologist. Was it Tertullian who said, *post coitem, triste?* However that may be, Symons is neither Wilde nor Swinburne. It was the pose of the eighteen-nineties to seem preternaturally aged, but no one succeeds very well except Max Beerbohm, who took it as a joke, and Arthur Symons, who accepted it as a code of behaviour.

What is *London Nights*? We are warned in the *Prologue*; and only the Philistine who misses everything, can miss the meaning:

"We are the puppets of a shadow-play,  
We dream the plot is woven of our hearts,  
Passionately we play the self-same parts  
Our fathers have played passionately yesterday,  
And our sons play tomorrow. There's no speech

In a desire, nor any idle word,  
Men have not said and women have not  
heard.....

We pass, and have our gesture; love and pain  
And hope and apprehension and regret  
Weave ordered lines into a pattern set  
Not for our pleasure, and for us in vain.  
The gestures eternal; we who pass  
Pass on the gesture; we, who pass, pass on  
One after one into oblivion . . ."

Well, this gesture is the code of manners which Symons put on. He has the sceptical sympathy of a gentleman, as he tells us in *In the Stalls*; he endeavors after his fashion to imagine how the other half live, and gets as far as the aristocrat usually does in such an attempt, being attracted only by the picturesquely amoral, girls whose lives are in their way, as mannered as his own. He sings of the stage-door, the *Ambassadeurs*, Carbis Bay, and Venetian Nights. He writes as though literature were a kind of eighteenth century grand tour. The very courtesans receive the ironic sympathy of the aloof. Consider *White Heliotrope*:

"The feverish rooms and that white bed,  
The tumbled skirts upon a chair,  
The novel flung half-open, where  
Hat, hair-pins, puffs and paints, are spread;

The mirror that has sucked your face  
Into its secret deep of deeps,  
And there mysteriously keeps  
Forgotten memories of grace;

And you, half dressed and half awake,  
Your slant eyes strangely watching me,  
And I, who watch you drowsily,  
With eyes that, having slept not, ache;

This (need one dread? nay, dare one hope?)  
Will rise, a ghost of memory, if  
Ever again my handkerchief  
Is scented with *White Heliotrope*."

This is charming, but it is a pattern, a decoration, and, set beside Rossetti's *Jenny*, we note the difference immediately. What the lady would be like in "real life" one may learn, if he cares to, by turning to the prostitute scene in Wells' *New Machiavelli*. Symons' poem has the same oblique relation to life as the epigrams in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. And Symons is "the only genuine and adequate representative" of the English decadence, not because he writes *Bianca* and *Stella Maris* and other poems over which the prurient may snuffle, but because he is the perfect artist.

People are always quoting Poe's dictum about the short story with admiration, but they mysteriously fail to remember that Poe wrote something of the same sort about the lyric poem. The poet, too, must so compose his work that every detail makes for the total unity of impression. What makes *London Nights* matter is precisely that it does not matter; that these light-o'-lovers, these music halls and stage doors and assignations in the rain are literally *composed*, and have no more relation to the real chorus girl and city alley-way than, let us say, the fairyland that Alfred Noyes calls Japan has to the real empire of the Mikado.

Symons without his manner becomes Laurence Hope; and the *Indian Love Songs* are such doubtful poetry that we see clearly why *London Nights* is good. Like Longfellow, Symons is gifted with exquisite literary tact. He seldom commits Swinburne's commonest blunder—that of over-estimating his material. One may say that if Verlaine had never written, Symons would have in-

vented him out of sheer *elan litteraire*. For here are the common decadent themes—the artificial life of slum and tavern and theatre and brothel—themes which excited John Davidson to a kind of reformatory frenzy, but which bring to Symons only a firmer hold on the brush, a more delicate nuance in the music. As pathology Bianca does not in one sense even interest him; he could not have written *Hermaphroditus*. Hence, I say, he has the manners of the fine gentleman—that detachment of the artist which is, fundamentally, his escape from life. Only the highest conviction can save this detachment from the appearance of cold and studied insolence.

"Mere violets of the wood,  
For all their sweetness, have not power to  
move  
The curiosity that rules my blood."

he writes, but the curiosity is the "idle curiosity" of the artist, not that of a medical practitioner.

No one writes of love and women nowadays as Symons does except perhaps Schnitzler. But the "süsses Madl" of the Viennese doctor is not akin to Symons' "belle amie." She has, even through the melancholy of Schnitzler's prose, a reality, a roundness that links her with the etchings of Zorn or with Chaucer's Criseyde. Symons' women are all virginal even in sin. Schnitzler is Strindberg softened by irony, but Symons is Browning and *hauteur*. When Anatol dismisses Elsa or Gabrielle, it is a little comic, a little vulgar, because it is human, all too human, but when Symons takes leave of his Venetian *bella*, we read:

"Life dreams itself; the world goes on  
Oblivious, in oblivion;  
Life dreams itself, content to keep  
Happy immortally, in sleep,"

and the lady is already translated with all things earthly to shadow:

"I have loved, not Love, but a pale,  
Mortal woman, and made  
The whole world for her sake;  
Let the sight of my eyes fall,  
And the whole world fade.  
I have dreamed; let me wake."

Symons is a composer of poems. In English we commonly connote by the word "poet" an ethical implication, so that Keats, who was anything but a philosopher, must be twisted and squeezed into a system of conduct because he wrote that beauty was truth. Symons is not a poet in this sense, but an artist who uses words as other men use chords or colors. All the seven arts have got into his blood. Sometimes he writes as though he were an impressionist painter as in *Twilight*:

"The pale gray sea crawls stealthily  
Up the pale lilac of the beach;  
A bluer grey, the waters reach  
To where the horizon ends the sea.

Flushed with a tinge of dusky rose,  
The clouds, a twilight lavender,  
Flood the low sky, and duskier  
The mist comes flooding in, and flows

Into the twilight of the land  
And darkness, coming softly down,  
Rustles across the fading sand  
And folds its arms about the town."

This is landscape, but here is an interior from the opening of *Spain*:

"Josefa, when you sing,



With clapping hands, the sorrows of your  
Spain,  
And all the bright-shawled ring  
Laugh and clap hands again,  
I think how all the sorrows were in vain.

The footlights flicker and spire  
In tongues of flame before your tiny feet,  
My warm-eyed gipsy, higher,  
And in your eyes they meet  
More than their light, more than their golden  
beat.

You sing of Spain, and all  
Clap hands for Spain and you, and for the  
song;  
One dances, and the hall  
Rings like a beaten gong  
With louder-handed clamours of the throng."

Such things are seen by a painter—  
the "values" of the sea-beach he got  
from the impressionists, and he de-  
scribes the high lights in the picture of  
Josefa precisely as if he were going to  
paint them.

Latterly he has abandoned painting  
for music. Consider, for instance, this  
marvellous lyric in which, as in Mall-  
arme, sound trembles on the verge of  
silence:

"O water, voice of my heart, crying in the  
sand,  
All night long crying with a mournful cry,  
As I lie and listen, and cannot understand  
The voice of my heart in my side, or the voice  
of the sea,  
O water, crying for rest, is it I, is it I?  
All night long the water is crying to me.

Unresting water, there shall never be rest  
Till the last moon drop and the last tide fall,  
And the fire of the end begin to burn in the  
West;  
And the heart shall be weary and wonder and  
cry like the sea,  
And life long crying without avail,  
As the water all night long is crying to me."

This is Debussy, and it is also what  
Tennyson tried to write all his life  
without ever quite succeeding. So in  
*Cesare Borgia*, Symons' last book, the  
speeches are not speeches but music,  
music out of Strauss and Ravel and the  
moderns. Who but a musician would  
finger blank verse like this?

"I tell you, Cesare, there's a wind in my heart  
That will not let me rest; there are great wings  
Of birds that beat against the winds; storms  
Everlasting and the unresting waters; loves  
That are more drowsy than the bees at noon  
That have trafficked on the heath and sucked  
the heather:  
And I am all of these and none of these."

*Cesare Borgia* is not a play, but a sym-  
phonic poem. Indeed, Symons is not a  
dramatist, except perhaps here and  
there in his play about Nero in the  
*Tragedies*.

Well, no man can write forever of art  
without having some opinion of the  
world, and the creed of Symons is called  
symbolism. The root of symbolism is a  
sensativeness to Time, which Symons  
shares with Shakespeare. He might in-  
scribe over his poems some couplet from  
the *Sonnets*:

"Like as the waves make towards the pebbled  
shore,  
So do our minutes hasten to their end,"

or some large stanza out of Spencer,  
brooding over mutability. Time hap-  
pens to us, and we are helpless. Even  
the artist, who so much resembles God,  
is as helpless as God is to stay the  
eternal flux of visions:

"And the only world is the world of my  
dreams,

And my weaving the only happiness:  
 For what is the world but what it seems?  
 And who knows but that God, beyond our  
     guess,  
 Sits weaving worlds out of loneliness."

Mr. More—I can not get away from the amazing Mr. More—says that this is all wrong, that this is not the true Nirvana. Somehow I recall *The Tempest*:

"the baseless fabric of this vision,  
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
 As dreams are made on, and our little life  
 Is rounded with a sleep."

It is better for poetry, at least, that Symons prefers being wrong with Shakespeare to being right with Mr. More. As to whether Symons believes in illusion or disillusion or not I do not know, but he believes in art. This, I take it, is what *Faustus and Helen* means. When Helen says:

"My beauty has been dust so many years

I know not how the memory of it lasts  
 Among men's minds so long....

The one good thing  
 Is life, for there is nothing in the grace:  
 I have been dead, and there is nothing there."

she is answered, not by Faustus, but by Symons himself in *Credo*:

"Each, in himself, his hour to be and cease  
 Endures alone, but who of men shall dare,  
 Sole with himself, his single burden bear,  
 All the long day until the night's release?  
 Yet ere night falls, and the last shadows close,  
 This labour of himself is each man's lot;  
 All he has gained of earth shall be forgot,  
 Himself he leaves behind him when he goes.  
 If he has any valiancy within,  
 If he has made his life his very own,  
 If he has loved or laboured, and has known  
 A strenuous virtue, or a strenuous sin:  
 Then, being dead, his life was not all vain,  
 For he has saved what most desire to lose,  
 And he has chosen what the few must choose,  
 Since life, once lived, shall not return again.  
 For of our time we lose so large a part  
 In serious trifles, and so oft let slip  
 The wine of every moment, at the lip  
 Its moment, and the moment of the heart.  
 We are awake so little on the earth,  
 And we shall sleep so long, and rise so late,  
 If there is any knocking at that gate  
 Which is the gate of death, the gate of birth."

## Culture

BY HELENE MULLINS.

I have heard too many  
 Well-sounding phrases  
 Your simple words,  
 Though they be of truth,  
 Affect me not.

# "Serious" Uses of the American Language

BY JOHN VAN ALSTYNE WEAVER.

WHEN my book of verses, "In American," first appeared, several critics were querulous concerning the statement on the jacket that "here is the first use of the vernacular for serious literature."

I have always wished to explain just what that statement of the publisher meant. My attention has been called to "The Bigelow Papers," with the question as to whether that was not a use for serious literature, and also to the poems of Carl Sandburg and of Vachel Lindsay, who, some months before the publication of my book, published "The Golden Whales of California," with the subtitle, "And Other Verses in the American Language."

First, as to the application of the word, "serious." What the publisher meant to underline was the fact that where Ring W. Lardner and his imitators, H. C. Witwer and Ed Streeter, had used the lingo with complete effectiveness, their point of view was either frankly comic or satiric. Before them, Artemus Ward, Josh Billings and Petroleum V. Nasby, to name the headliners of a whole burlesque school, used a hick dialect for very broad satire. But none of these ever pretended that their stuff was seriously intended.

Bret Harte, it is true, used a combination of farmer and miner dialects, but only in a few isolated cases was the intention other than satiric. Eugene Field had at his command a very good

Rube vocabulary, but it verged more upon the profane than the inspirational. James Whitcomb Riley, I will grant, may have intended to write literature when he produced such native sketches as "Seein' Things at Night," and "When the Frost is on the Pumpkin"; but no one today, I believe, mistakes his productions for anything but somewhat shallow, fairly easy tear-jerkers, a trifle above such ballads as "Silver Threads Among the Gold." City talk was used with excellent results by (I think it was) Will Irwin, in "Love Sonnets of a Hoodlum," and "Love Sonnets of a Stenographer." But those were *tours de force*; and I feel sure that no real effort was made to reflect the American people, their lives and their thoughts, in those verses..

Now, as to "The Bigelow Papers," Lowell had an intensely serious purpose in writing them. That purpose was not, however, to give a picture of America—it was not literary, even. He had a lesson to drive home. Each of those verses is a sermon or a strong editorial—on the Mexican war at first, later on Abolition. He wanted to drive home his points, he wanted to spread his propaganda, and he figured that putting his utterances into the mouth of a farmer was the most effective method. If he could better have accomplished his job by writing in Hindustani or in Polish, he would have done so. The language was merely a means to an end.

And the dialect he used was a specialized, farmer-dialect, incomprehensible, I'll wager, to most of the city-folk of that day.

What I was attempting to do is summed up very briefly: I wanted to show in the American language how the great illiterate majority of the American people—and the majority is illiterate, as H. L. Mencken has clearly demonstrated, and as you will easily discover for yourself if you listen in on any conversation where the mob is foregathered—thinks, acts, and dreams. That is the most important word, *dreams*. For it is only in the ambitions, the hopes and the visions of a people that they are worth literary consideration. True enough, most of them are so inarticulate that the dreams have to be surmised. But I was bent upon showing, if they could become articulate, in what manner they would do so. Mr. Mencken, by his great book, "The American Language," had broken the ground by demonstrating that there is, in this country, a clearly-defined language, absolutely distinct from English, following regular rules, and common to the entire country. Have you ever considered that there are over fifty distinct dialects within the realms of Great Britain, and that natives, say of Yorkshire, have great difficulty in conversing with say the Welsh? And yet any native of Florida can talk with one from Maine and one from California, as army life illustrated, and, except for an occasional localism, all three "get" everything that is said. This language, while it is always comprehensible to the commoners, is not always so to those who

speak literary English; and it is, on the other hand, somewhat difficult for a teamster, for instance, to take in the statements of a college professor. The languages are separate—and the majority speaks American.

Now, omitting entirely any discussion of my own experiments, there are three men who come to mind at once as conscious users of American. In verse, the two I have already mentioned, Lindsay and Sandburg. In prose, Eugene G. O'Neill.

O'Neill, from his earliest plays, has used the vernacular, and used it with an ease and an insight that shows his continuous recognition of it as the every-day speech of our natives. The two most conspicuous examples are in "Beyond the Horizon", where it is more the farmer-sailor type than the general, and in "Diff'rent". The speeches of the good-for-nothing soldier-villain in the latter piece are marvels of accuracy and characterization. There is, of course, some specialized slang, principally army talk; but as a whole the speeches are comprehensible to anyone, and will not, I feel sure, lose force or meaning as time shifts the vocabulary; for he has plucked phrases from the universal American. ("The Emperor Jones," is of course, negro dialect.)

With Sandburg, we have a different proposition. Here is a man who knows the lingo as well as any in the country. But he has never been content to "go the whole hog." He mixes isolated American words and phrases in with literary English. He will often juxtapose a polysyllable and some Americanism such as "galoot" or "jazz". If he



were anything but the supreme artist that he is, the effect might sometimes be ludicrous. But, by some magic of his own, he never fails of his effect. How he does it, I can't understand; perhaps it is because of his unbelievable knowledge of the people he writes about, of life in general, and of the human heart. And he is so sincere, so overwhelmingly sincere. His use of American is unique; he can do without it, but it adds a tang, a force, a vividness.

When we come to Lindsay, we see a writer who frankly uses American only to get a clever effect. Except in "Bryan, Bryan, Bryan," I cannot see that it is much help to him. I will except also a few passages in "The Golden Whales." He does not really understand American, I am sure. He knows some of the jargon—principally small-town and Chautauqua—but of the underlying principles of the language, its quaint quirks and its essential differences from English, I am convinced he knows nothing. Also, I do not think he knows much about the people who speak it—Springfielders and farmers, perhaps he knows, but not the inhabitants of cities, at any rate. He has no need for American, anyway. His poems are poems *per se*. The exquisite "I Hear These Things When Gipsy Fiddles Cry" and the profound "Johnny Appleseed," to mention two of his latest, are pieces of literary English. And when he says "Other poems in the American language," he

means, "Poems with a few American words in them."

Robert Frost, who shares with Sandburg and E. A. Robinson the distinction of being held by many critics at the head of American poetry, uses American naturally and beautifully where he wishes so to do. It is not the illiterate, the essential American, but a very legitimate sub-dialect,—half-cultivated New England farmer-speech.

We in the United States have a lingo, an offspring of English as the Irish lingo used by Synge and Lady Gregory is an offspring, and as organized and definite as the Irish is. When the Abbey Theatre group use Irish, they do not take any half-way measures; they do not mix in Irishisms and Anglicisms; their speeches are true transcriptions.

And the other night, when I heard the lyric phrases, the rich, imagery-evoking, arresting sentences of "The Playboy of the Western World" coming over the footlights, I breathed a silent prayer that some persons would come forward in the near future to do effectually what I only experimented with—to take this strong, racy, eloquent American of ours, and do for it what Synge did for the Irish.

The American people, their customs, their thoughts, their dreams, shown forth in their own language—that's what I hope to see as the backbone of the coming American literature.

# Transfiguration

BY ROBARD EMMET UA CINNEIDIG.

When you had gone  
And the house was locked,  
I said:

"Let me turn my thoughts to God.  
The night is my own;  
I will read and pray."

I opened the Bible  
You left behind,  
And turned to the gospel of Luke  
And read  
Of the woman  
Who came where the Saviour sat  
And washed His feet  
With a flood of tears:

" 'And turning to Simon  
Jesus said:  
Wherefore I say to thee,  
Many sins are forgiven her  
Because she hath loved much.' "

And as I was reading  
I heard a voice  
Speaking the words,  
And I turned and looked,  
And the Saviour was there,  
Standing before me in the room.

But I was not afraid,  
For the voice I heard  
And the face I saw,  
And the look of love in the eyes  
Were yours.

# Smoke

BY LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL.

“**A**ND, oh yes, Gloria wired about getting a ring,” Septimus said in his quiet, slow way.

The chauffeur had drawn the car up, painstakingly, in the snow, so that it was diagonal to the building, at the end of the driveway in front of the building, so that Septimus and Joan, wrapped in their robes, shivering just a little, could see when the other machine drove up, the undertaker's machine. Septimus had gone in for a moment, but came out saying it was warmer outside. They talked calmly, easily, quietly. Everything had been said, about the last days, about all the plans they knew. They felt able to go through with this last rite, though they did not know what was ahead, what that grey building held. Emery was with them as much as he had ever been—a pervading presence, interested, understanding, amused, distressed that they should be distressed, his mind going on, as always...on beyond theirs, but coming back for theirs, and back, and back.

“...about getting a ring,” Septimus was suddenly saying, as quietly, as almost absently, as he had said all the other things. And all the emotion which was smoothed down inside, held as easily as if in one gloved hand, slipped in a second, ruffled, rose. She had wanted to see the ring again. Now she would see it again. But the mention of it was like slipping a key, suddenly, easily, but unexpectedly, into a lock. Tears came,

and it was hard to speak. Septimus didn't remember the ring. She told him what it was like, as if it were very important. The ring was he himself to her...it brought his hands, and his hands were himself...his gestures... They talked of his hands a little. She told him that the last movements he made, with his left hand only, were natural, as he always gestured more with his left hand. She showed Septimus the gestures. He was pleased at the niceness of even this tiny point. But, of course, it wasn't tiny.

...A girl in a garishly bright cerise corduroy coat walked up the long sidewalk, looked around a little, and then went into the great dark-grey stone building. Why that touch?...

Then the other machine came, driving carefully, the hood back, two caskets, one black cloth, the other brown wood, held in the back. She and Septimus got out, and went into the dark, dark, bare, cold stone hall.

“The black one is Emery's,” Septimus said.

They stood while it was brought in. It was placed on a wheeled stretcher. “Will you follow?” the man who belonged in the building said. One of the undertaker's men went with him. They walked behind, slowly, just around a corner, and into an oblong room. As they went an organ—some kind of a tin, artificial, mechanical organ—began to play, very slowly, “Nearer, my God,

to Thee, nearer to Thee." In the middle of the oblong room, which was something like a little, make-believe chapel, with organ-pipes at one end and three or four rows of benches at the other, was an oblong space, roped off with black, and with a black canopy over it. Into this space the casket was wheeled. Septimus and Joan stood quiet, still, almost rigid, by the side. The horror of all this demanded utter quietude, calmness, indifference, and a grasping firmly of things. All this had nothing to do with Emery. He was there with them, looking on, seeing it as comic and horrible, undisturbed, reassuring. Joan was sure of Septimus, sure that he knew all she knew... knew it even more easily and naturally, less rigidly than she. He felt the horror less, the humor more. Emery did not need to reassure him—he and Emery were smiling together, very delight in Emery's face, contentment and contemplation in Septimus's.

Then, slowly, slowly, the worst thing happened. The black canopy, and the casket, began to lower, lower, lower. The canopy lowered until it reached the floor, and on the top of the canopy was—the semblance of a newly-covered grave—something which looked like brown earth, something spread over it which looked like palm-leaves. The men went out, and for a moment they were alone.

This was the most comic thing she had ever seen. Unbelief had run its course...there was no further to go in unbelief. They came with certainty and grief, and humor, and beauty in their hearts...and they were given a tin organ, a make-believe grave, for their assurance, to make it all seem ha-

bitual, decent, comforting, to them. These people did not know that the burning of the body, its going in smoke, was the most beautiful thing they could suppose...they had no idea but that the old way was really the best and that a pretense of keeping it up would be the only consolation. To have a grave dragged in! To have this make-believe grave there on the floor!

"Thank Heaven we were here, to bring some thoughts here, some ideas, to see how it is, as Emery would see it," Joan said.

"Yes...we two," said Septimus.

The men came back and spoke quietly with Septimus. He was to go down and identify the body.

"Will you stay here?" he asked Joan, with the same quietness.

"I will come with you," she said. It seemed to be the greatest decision she had ever made. But she knew that she would rather look again at Emery, if anyone was going to, than anything else. She was not afraid.

Then Septimus said it would be better not...in words she did not notice or remember. Gloria had asked especially that nobody see him (Gloria had asked...!) He was very changed. It would be better not.

"Of course. I will not go if she did not want anyone to," she said, and put her head up. And Septimus went, with one of the men.

"You stay here with the lady," the man called back to another man. And together, in the dark, damp, icy-cold stone hall, they stood, while Septimus was looking for the last time at Emery, a thing she could not do. Reaction from the tension set in. She wanted to cry.



She cried a little without showing it. Septimus came up, and the man asked them pleasantly if they didn't want to wait in the office, and motioned to the room at the other end of the front of the building, where a long table and chairs were. They went in there. Joan sat down at the end of the table, her back to the front, Septimus at one side, near her. Then she cried. She put her face in her hands and shook with perfectly silent sobs. She loosened her veil and put it up. Then she stopped sobbing, got up blindly, and walked to the window at the back. She did not realize then what she would see from that window. But when she got there, she saw the low, one-story part of the building in which the cremating was done. Deep, white snow lay all around. A tall, slim, dark chimney went up.

"Septimus, come and look at the sun," she said suddenly. He came, and looked. It was a ball of fire, red through a kind of haze, red-fire and round through the greyiness of the day—a greyiness which seemed to be partly made by the snow, reflected up. It seemed a painted day, a painted sun, a type, not a reality, unique. The sun was close at the left of the black, thin chimney, and low down. It almost touched the chimney.

Suddenly, as they looked, and before they had gotten to expecting it, or realizing what would happen, smoke was coming out of the chimney, softly, slowly, at first, then more thick. Inadvertently they had come upon the heart of their adventure, on its beauty, on what was real. The men had not known that this was the beautiful thing. They thought a false grave made on the floor would comfort, would seem real to them.

They themselves, instinctively, had come to this window. This was what the rites should be...some lovely window from which one could look and watch the smoke go up! For a long, long time the smoke went up, filled with delicate colors some of the time, sometimes black, but always gentle, steady, and always blowing to the East. They talked a little, spoke a little to each other, or to themselves, which was the same, as they watched. They spoke of the beauty of it, the symbolism, of how Emery would see more in it than they, and of how the sunset always symbolized the going soul. While they watched, the undertaker's man came in, with Emery's ring, and asked Septimus to sign a receipt for it. When he had gone Septimus put it into Joan's hand, and she held it close in her hands, and to her breast, close to her. It meant Emery to her. This inexpressible heart of things...that they two should stand and watch the smoke and think his thoughts and feel him near, and that his ring should be pressed in her hands, where he would have wanted it to be. He was content, fulfilled, mature. Unbelief was far, far, left behind, now. The timelessness which only Emery could invoke was all about them. This was the kind of thing which one would dream, would say softly as being ideal, knowing very well it could not come to pass.

"When I die," someone might say, "I want the two dearest people in the world to me...the dearest man...the dearest woman...to take my body to some wintry place at sunset, with the sun red above the snow, and watch the smoke, which will be like my soul, rising from

a tall, slim chimney, to the sky, and going always to the East. And one of those two shall hold closely to her, for my comfort and for hers, the ring I wear...while my soul goes. And I will be there with them while it goes."

And this was what did happen.

And when the smoke grew thin and thin, and stopped, three birds flew straight across where it had been, two together, and then one a little way behind, flying North, which for a bird means that the Spring is near.

They went then to see the front windows of the room, whose panes were diamond-shaped. They stood there, talking a little, looking out at the waste of snow, dotted with sweeping, hanging, fringing evergreens all through the great front yard, and waiting for the ashes to be brought to them. Joan traced lines in the dusty diamonds with her gloved fore-finger.

"Emery would find some meaning in that which you just made," Septimus said, watching her. "You made a cross in a diamond."

"I didn't know what I made," she said, "but I knew he would think it was something." And they looked at each other and smiled, in a great happiness, in a great secret which they had between them.

They talked of many things, about Emery.

"I wish you could keep the ring," said Septimus, earnestly, simply, wistfully.

They waited a long time. The man in the little front office next to this was fat, and light-haired. He kept saying it wouldn't be long now. He talked over

the telephone a little, flippantly, flirtatiously. His hair was really almost red, under the electricity.

Then the other man came, bringing the ashes in a small, round, bronze-colored metal box. The red-haired man lifted the lid for them to see.

"Just bone, lime-bone," he said, and they looked at the white bits of bone-substance which half-filled the round jar. Then he sealed it, with many accurate, habitual movements, and asked Septimus to sign a paper. He had scissors, pincers, paste, twine, everything ready, in his desk. What a strange responsibility,—tying up lime-bone in boxes. What fussy detail of paraphernalia for its accomplishment! He wrapped the box in paper and handed it to Septimus. Septimus handed it immediately to Joan, and she took it and held it with one hand in the curve of the other arm...the left arm. It was still warm. Unbelief... At first she thought she did not want to take it, but she felt a strength of bravery not usual. Of course she would take it. And then she was glad. This was what he would want. All the way into the city, over the rough, snowy roads, almost impassable, the car lurching, the steady chauffeur guiding it well, over the ferry, with workmen getting home from work, she carried it, the cooling box, close to her, now in her right arm, and the ring in her hand. They talked a little, intermittently. Septimus dropped her at a corner, to take the elevated. She gave him the ring and the box, whose string was coming a little untied. She held the ring close in both hands before she let it go.

Then... "Here's the ring," she said, quite evenly. And he took it.

She climbed the El steps and bought her ticket and went out through the door, past the chopper's box and onto the platform, and waited with the other people waiting there. Life was going on... had been going on all this afternoon. Now she was back. She looked the same. They did not know. Nobody would know. All she wanted was to get home, to Hilda... perhaps they could have dinner there together, quietly, and she could tell her how it was.

When she got almost up the third flight the door opened, and she could see that Freddie and Frances were there, and Hilda was in her brown dress, and was going out with them for dinner. Hilda looked desperate. There was nothing to do about it. It was hard to

go in. Her throat began to get ready to force her voice out as if naturally. It was as if she had to wedge through something, push her way in. There were two textures, two densities of atmosphere, the thin one from which she had come, the thick one of these rooms where they were sitting, idly, usually, their faces turned toward the door where she would come in.

When they had gone, she was too tired to eat. Although he had been there with them, she wanted to sit down and write him just how it had been. There were several things especially she wanted to remember for him, as she went slowly to sleep... the round sun by the tall chimney, the crosses which Septimus had said she made in diamonds, birds flying, and straight-blown smoke.

## Gothic

BY JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER.

Think not, my dearest, though I love to speak  
With windy pride about the rock I use  
To build with—oh think not I would refuse  
The gargoyles of your fancy. Every bleak  
Cornice and every archway I now seek  
To have them softened with your arabesques,  
Your graceful, happy scrollery on desks,  
On altars, lecterns, niches and on pews.

Though I may labor with a fervour that  
Is mediaeval in its piety,  
Completion finds my temples gaunt and flat;  
Cold and erect. But in satiety  
Of sternness, I must turn to you, I find,  
To ornament the Gothic of my mind.

# We Are Gathered at the Fountain

BY STEPHEN TA VAN.

"WELL, there seems to be no question about it," said my friend George Greggsmith, raising meditatively his noggin of my whiskey. "This secrecy-stuff has come to stay. This pussy-footed business, I mean, this sneaking rotten rum over the transom and swigging it on the sly. The will of the Great Amurrican Peepul has spoken, through legal interpreters, and we are the goats."

"If you mean what you have in your hand," said I, "when you say rotten rum, I think you show very poor taste. That stood me eighty-five the case and is quite high-class Scotch, so far as I know."

"So far as you know," George repeated derisively. "Well, what do you know? Your day of joy is over. Forty years old, with a bum digestion, what do *you* care about good liquor? You're too long out of practice to be accurate, and anyway, you drank so much in the old days that your taste got flatted. . . . "Not," he continued, switching back aggrievedly, "that I give a hoot for liquor myself—I can take it or let it alone—but I think Prohigh is damned bad for the community morals."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "you are about to speak on the subject of personal privilege."

But George is not an utter fool.

"No matter about personal privilege," he said in effect. "What I mean to say is that the loss of our liquor threatens

to turn us into a nation of slush sots. Deprived of our immemorial privilege of getting a real edge in that palladium of our liberties, the neighborhood groggery, we gather at the soda fountain and swig adulterated syrup. The instinct of the herd forces it to titivate its collective stomach gregariously, and with rum gone, what is left for a sop to its bovine yearning? Answer: A horrid volume of liquid and semi-liquid slops, masquerading as refreshment.

"At every corner and in between you see them, the slopsters," he went on bitterly, "strung out along the bar without even a brass rail to give them self-respect. They don't look happy, they can't possibly *be* happy; they are just bogging down their insides for the coroner, without the satisfaction of a jag. Dope? If you tell me they get dope, I shall say: 'What is that to me?' I am not interested in the conventional standard. Personally I have more respect for the man who goes to a counter for a shot of hop than for the one who eats a sundae—he's getting something and the other isn't. But let that pass. What I object to is the asininity of the whole proceeding: burdening expensively the internals of a nation, *sans* exhilaration; on the contrary, with a gloom."

He drained my whiskey and departed shortly thereafter, fuming.

When next I saw him it was through the open window of an ice cream par-



lor. He sat at a small triangular table with his two one-quarter-grown nieces, absorbing a product of the place. In fact, my startled glance caught him with the familiar dazed look in his eyes and the business end of a long-handled spoon in his mouth.

"Aha, renegade!" I cried. "How thou hast fallen, Lucifer, Lucifer, son of the morning!"

"Come in," he called sheepishly. "Cease bawling, and have a root sundae with enamine embroidery."

"Noa, noa."

"A Queen's Delight of addled cream, upholstered in pickled plush!"

"Et tu, Brute."

"A candied pig's foot, lemon-verbena flavored and sprinkled with chloride of lime."

"Get thee behind."

"A blupphah—the Turkish sweetmeat. It maddens one—makes you see blood spouting from the trees."

Indeed, there was a kind of heavy madness in his manner. I felt it communicate itself to me, almost I was yielding; but just at that point the little red-haired niece was seized by a spasm of choking which required avuncular attention; George took his basilisk eye from mine, and I escaped.

Yet but two evenings later, I awoke temporarily from the trance characteristic of the disease, to find myself in that self-same parlor with a perfectly respectable lady, munching an acorn sundae with linseed dressing and cochineal!

It is insidious, the soft-drink lure. Our liquor has been taken from us, and as George said, it seems essential to our national peace to fill our tummies with

something not quite food. Throughout the land the rummery has yielded to the sloppery. We sap up some sweetish fluid to begin the day; eat gelid mush for lunch; and when night falls must solace our weariness determinedly, if in the open, with a frosted combination.

At the baseball game we soak each other's trouser-knees with drippings from innumerable cones and bottles passed from hand to hand. I have not visited a classic football fight for years, but the mind trembles and the spirit shudders at thought of the replacement, in the grim biting air above those hard November gridirons, of the generous warming flask by a dish of orange ice... Ah, what tender memories of Princeton and dear, awful old New Haven the connotation doth dislodge! And eke of a tumultuous Cambridge game, whereat we had too many tasks, and from the ensuing party three divorces resulted directly, and a fourth quarrel was patched up with difficulty, Jim Perkins having scratched his wife's arm on the way home.

Today, if one desire to entertain a lady, he may feed her; but beyond that, there is slight opportunity for the suave, time-honored query:

"You never by any chance indulge in any stronger drink than water, do you, dear?"

One can only invite her to a sloppery, and there, over a table coldly reminiscent of the last previous prohigh debauch, urge her to select without stint from a bill suggesting nothing more vividly than a list of the worst perfumes. How to work up steam for convincing social argument in such conditions, may be called, unexaggeratedly, a problem.

Nor is the more elaborate hostelry of the present helpful. Hotel provender has not improved conspicuously since the banishment of rum, and gone are those deferential yet subtly congenial waiter-like persons, who accelerated by imperceptible degrees an evening's gaiety, giving deftly to the conviviality a tone daring yet confidentially home-like.

Yes, gone are Jacques and Henri and Maurice—or discouraged—mostly; and gone are the dear, delightful occasions over which they presided inconspicuously. I am aware that the change is for the better—that ice cream, with maple syrup, is fundamentally more conducive to the system's health than bacardi or sloe gin. The corner grogshop had to go. But why must they destroy all, *all* the pretty and forthputting, if at times a trifle rakish inns, or turn them into creameries? And let me submit in passing, Reader, that when quantity is taken into consideration, the corner saloon itself was not more deleterious than is the creamery. Can you seriously believe that twenty nut sun-dæes, for example, produce a morning-feeling less all-gone than an equal number of (say) gin fizzes?

It may be, of course, that I am unreasonably prejudiced in the old inn's favor—in the first place, by the enchantment of distance and disuse. George Greggsmith spoke to me in part the truth: I am indeed fortyish, and off liquor for life. But the age brings its compensations and the indisposition is mental, not physical. Life amuses me in a manner more clean-cut, now, when I am sober. As to George's slur at my digestion, it is base slander. I can at

will eat lobster, cucumbers and a double biscuit tortoni, with any man. I do admit, however, the romantic potency of intervening space, and doubtless I euphueize a trifle, when the discussion is of battles long ago, as any oldster views his early escapades through a mellow glow.

Secondly, I may have been unusually lucky in my inns. I am by experience unable to observe the inn as presented on the stage, or to listen to a preacher damn it from the platform, without chuckling. Foul dens there have been—and still are and always will be—if one hunt for them or wander blindly; but there were also pleasant coigns, maintained for the relief of care and advancement of friendship, which have fought in vain to survive without degeneration the ice cream slide.

There is for instance a spot at the head of a long, narrow New England lake, where, taking advantage of a slight outjutting, an errant genius of entertainment set up a refuge in the rustic style. The buildings were simple; a large cabin, with wide verandas over the lake; and several smaller ones for sleeping quarters, if you stayed. The proprietor kept beagles and game chickens. He was rumored to be involved in counterfeiting and to operate the hostelry and his fancying as smoke-screens. The tale added an agreeable spice of wickedness without real danger.

Steep, wooded hills arose on both sides to receive you as you entered the lake's valley from the South. It was usually early evening, the wonderful New England gloaming, when the sun has sunk but its influence is still felt,

and through the magical twilight air the country sounds are intensified. You came up over the little wooden bridges across the narrow brooks, along a winding road between stone fences, until, where the lake deepened, the hills drew closer to the water and took you beneath their shadow of oak and walnut and spruce, with here and there a white birch and a grim group of stone pines.

There the road became difficult; two cars could hardly pass and to meet a load of hay meant a campaign. If you were ferrying a party, you were a busy citizen for a half-mile before the way widened suddenly at the inn, for no one but the driver watched, and a little carelessness anent the ruts was likely to lose Mary for you into the lake on one side, or scrape off Jillson's head against the trunk of a pine on the other.

At the inn, uproar ensued. Personal supervision of the proprietor was required for the preparation of drinks and the steak or chicken dinner; his bland, blonde mistress was requisitioned to regulate the mechanical music; and Louis the head waiter, who was also bus boy and man of all work, was set scampering to clear the floor and join half a dozen small tables to form a long one. A couple sought the canoes for an ante-dinner paddle, another went to the kennels to inspect the beagles, a third danced, and the remaining quartet settled beside a table on the east veranda to commence the main diversion of the evening.

Ah, gels of those halcyon days, Ulleeze and Ustelle, brown-eyed sisters with pulled-molasses hair, light of foot and in temperament laughter-loving, with odd streaks of gloom in part self-

dramatized; out of my petty segment of the Dream, now for the moment separate from yours, I pour to you libation—not in chocolateade! Your Grandma hated me, while you yourselves distinguished me but slightly if at all from the continuous procession of young men, and soon became to me merely two in the company of sheepfaces. Yet we had gorgeous times together at the lake's head, and without conscious sentimentality I like once in a blue moon to think of you: of Ustelle, in one of her sullen moods, conversing fluently of suicide, then brisking up to imitate with gusto a quarrel-scene by her hated Cousin Bruce and his actress-inamorata; of Ulleeze, possessor of the inimitably graceful legs, dancing upon the tabletop, to our delight and the confusion of sundry straight-laced guests who had appeared by accident.

Always I remember her—Ulleeze—most pleasurably as dancing; and she could not have trod those wild or languorous measures so gloriously on sun-daes. There is to me, about the dancing of the prohigh gels today, a kind of heavy, calculated vampishness, a pawn-broking undisguised—perchance I tread on ground too dangerous.

Ustelle is dead. She died (as you may guess) not by her own hand but by disease. Pneumonia caught her after the exposure of a college prom, and like a horseman carried her away. Her sister, shaken by terror of sudden death, pondered convent protection, but married a Philadelphian instead. I suppose Ulleeze is matronly now; but character does not change and were it not for the previously-acknowledged, deadly insidiousness of the stuff, I could





not imagine her, even corpulent and with offspring in tow, as guzzling Nut Strawberry Perfection in a sloppery... She was so tactful, so discerning, on the way home! How agreeably she clung, when through the midnight darkness of the woods the yells of an escaped maniac from the state asylum resounded eerily—an incident, by the way, to which a well-known literary efficiency critic objected, on the grounds of improbability, when I attempted to introduce it to current fiction.

Not long ago chance took me, on a trip with friends, into the motor-neighborhood of that inn. A heavy thunderstorm was coming up, I remembered the hostelry by the lake, and we sought shelter.

The scene, dark in the weird pause before the falling of the shower, lay lovely as ever, but the inn grounds were dishevelled. No sound of beagles issued from the kennels, the weeds grew shoulder-high within the poultry-runs, half-open doors sagged from the hinges of the little cabins, and the main building had the general unkempt look of the deserted.

Our approach roused action, however, in the person of the proprietor, Higgins, who shuffled out lukewarmly, wearing slippers and a shifty eye. Aforetime, he had affected riding-boots and met all comers with bravado.

"Hullo, Higgins," I called. "Don't you know me? I used to come here often enough."

"Kek, kek," he coughed. "Yeh, I remember ye. Put yer car under the shed if ye like, 'n come in. Can't give ye no dinner, though—chef left Thursday, kek, kek."

"Then you're still running?"

"Been tryin' to, kek, kek. They got me pretty strong, three-four times. Cost me more'n I had to buy 'em off, kek, kek. Can't sell ye nothin' now. Ab-so-lute-ly drumtight."

After a little thawing this decision melted and he offered us green whiskey, costly at any price. It developed that he had a precarious trade in the poison, under semi-protection from rural politicians who found his place useful. He did not expect to keep it up much longer. Harried by the authorities and reformers, he had been driven to unwise risks, several objectionable incidents had happened, the house had got a bad name. At any moment he was likely to be shaken down, and soon or late they would get him on a count for which they could lock him up.

"Ye can't make it pay without a license, kek, kek," he coughed drearily. "Folks won't come."

Bully for folks, shout I. The idea that excitement is necessary as a safety-valve, to work off the sorrow of life, is pure bunk. And supposing the existence of license, is it not far more virtuous—and less expensive, save in doctors' bills—to stop at the corner half a dozen times a day and suck in quince pomade with jellied duberries, than to dash madly off into the country and eat a chicken dinner with gin rickey accompaniment, under the disintegrating influence of the wicked hills and lake, and dance, and paddle, and disturb the peace of nature by lovemaking in the open? There is an obvious restraint behind screened doors, and under fly-specked ceilings, a weight toward right-



eousness in the various conglomerations of ice cream. In that environment, and with such pabulum, no man can retain enough ambition to commit honest crime—unless, like George Greggsmith and me, he has at last been hounded by the sheer dank tang of countless chilly doses, to the border of desperate insanity.

For we have now—*Georges et moi*—despite oft-taken resolutions and occasional spurts of resistance, reached a semi-final stage. Haggard, bloated, with deadened eyes yet well-nigh sleepless, we charge upon the ice-packed counter every hour, or, endeavoring with

pitiful effort to steer a slanting course past the inveigling door, are drawn within, paralyzed, as though by a gigantic invisible hand.

Facing the scornful, pimply clerk, with black-rimmed finger-nails, behind the pseudo-bar, we murmur in dull unison:

"One clubhouse peanut cream, turned, with a dash of assafoetida meringue on the bottom side and two spoons," and then, "Two charmeuse sundaes, oyster motif, whipped."

After that, we are ready to sally forth and crack a policeman's toes, to hear them pop.

## A Bleak Day

BY OSCAR WILLIAMS.

Grey was the wind, and bleak the day,  
And One there was who talked to me;  
I cannot tell in words what he  
Took not a single word to say.

I only know that, strange and dim,  
His voice was sorrow in my brain,  
And in the twilight of the rain,  
Beyond belief, I cried to him.

The rain was hovering in the skies,  
The hills were uttering his name,—  
I know that night the darkness came  
Silent, with meaning in his eyes.

# Little Tales of Mexico

## No. 2. *How Rafael Carried His Head*

BY VINCENT STARRETT.

**T**WENTY years of abnormal peace having dragged themselves away, normal conditions were resumed with gay abandon in the City of Mexico. Machine guns, placed at the heads and intersections of important thoroughfares, swept the streets with destructive impartiality. Untidy heaps of dead had collected in exposed places, and individual corpses leered grotesquely from curious nooks wherein vagrant bullets miraculously had strayed. It seemed that the dead were playing peek-a-boo from behind the stone pillars and in the embrasures of adjoining buildings.

Rodin's exquisite marbles over the grand doorway of the *Teatro Nacional*, withstood the storm. On either side of those heroic figures the walls were pocked and scarred, but these stood forth unscathed and eloquent, a triumph of Art over the follies of little men. A dead Indian lolled on the wide steps beneath; he seemed to be basking in the yellow sunlight that poured in a rich glow over the ornate palace. His eyes stared solemnly out into the white street, as if he were pondering the unaccustomed experience of being dead.

The rattle and hum of General Huerta's light artillery was so constant that, had it suddenly ceased, a great silence would have seemed to have fallen over the world. It did not cease. Instead, save for a few hours at night, it backgrounded the infantry volleys and the shouting of confused combatants,

with steady continuity. This had been going on for two days.

Over the sinister cacaphony, and the sheets of leaden, horizontal hail, flapped the *zopilotes*, the black scavengers of Mexico, awaiting the feast of darkness. O, sacred birds of mystery! worshipped by Aztecs of old, there is today no mystery about your funereal mission in Mexico.

Rafael Hernandez zigzagged carefully along the sidewalk of the Avenida Cinco de Mayo, slipping from pillar to doorway and from doorway to post, with the exaggerated caution of a Mexican Indian who values the top of his head. Ordinarily, Rafael was a listless enough *mesero* in a sufficiently unsavory eating-house; but on this day his agility was extraordinary. He would have preferred to have stayed at home, lying flat upon the hot roof of his dwelling, a position slightly above machinegun trajectory; but his weekly wage would cease were the truancy to become known . . . Vaguely, it occurred to him that the curious system of keeping open shop throughout the storming of a city was illogical, but he reflected that everyone was doing it, albeit behind closed shutters—save, indeed, for those merchants directly in the line of gunfire, most of whom were dead, and those who could not by any chance hope for patronage until quiet should have been restored. But a restaurant is an important establishment;

and, after all, noncombatants had been promised every courtesy.

Rafael paused to cross himself at sight of a huddled Indian, who crouched directly beneath a mirror of imposing dimensions, on the corner of a retail clothing emporium. The Indian's back was against a stone support, bracing a corner of the *portales*, and he seemed to be looking into the glass. He was quite dead. The mirror, shattered by stray bullets, reflected the twisted smile of the dead man in a dozen hideous distortions . . . The *mesero* shuddered and passed on, dashing frantically across an intervening thoroughfare to resume his slinking, oblique gait on the farther side . . . At length, the doorway of his own shop took him.

The gunfire gradually moved forward, rested for a time in the immediate neighborhood of the restaurant, which rejoiced in the name of *El Globo*, and pushed further into the city. In the breathing space, a colonel of the Madero forces clattered into the café, and bolted as much food as he could conveniently hold. He told a brave tale, but his appearance belied his heroic observations; he was haggard and alone.

"You are quite safe," he asserted, in payment for his meal. "We are pushing forward in force. By nightfall we shall have them clear of the city. Our second army is closing in from the North, and they will be trapped between our fires. Keep your heads, my friends, all will yet be well!"

A burst of firing from a new quarter startled him, and cut short his remarks. He retreated in earnest haste, but with a final ferocious twist at his mustachios.

"We are to keep our heads," muttered Rafael, darkly. "It is easy to say, and

hard to do. I shall keep mine on my shoulders by staying indoors."

"It is safe; it is safe," answered his superior. "A single bullet would flatten against that skull of your's, a volley would stud it with a circle of lead, and render it impregnable!"

"It is a head that tells me I am a fool for coming here to work," retorted Rafael. "To-morrow I shall keep it at home."

Some moments after Rafael Hernandez had reached this consoling decision in the matter of the safety of his head upon the morrow, a machine gun battery swung into position a block from the eating-house known as *El Globo*, and swept the street clean of moving things. Throughout the performance, Rafael and his superior lay upon the stone floor in the kitchen of the restaurant and mingled with the roaches. At the end of an hour, they ventured to rise and survey the street before their door.

New figures had been added to the silent congregation of the block. Close at hand, however, a motionless object stirred suddenly, and began to crawl toward them. They shut the door and fled again to the kitchen.

"It is your time to carry her dinner to the Spanish lady," said the proprietor. "Luckily, it is not far. You can safely venture to the corner. The soldiers have gone."

"To-morrow I shall stay at home," said Rafael, "and the Spanish lady may go without her dinner."

The proprietor shrugged.

"To-morrow is to-morrow," he sagely observed.

With the laden tray in his hands, Rafael paused.

"I shall lose my head," he protested.



## THE DOUBLE DEALER

"Then," said his superior, "you need a rattle of wheels, and a babble of not come to work tomorrow." A hoarse command echoed down the canyon. Then a gush of lead spouted through the doorway.

At this novel thought, the *mesero* to them. On the instant, the lone soldier in the doorway stepped out and laid a hand upon the *mesero's* arm. The hand fell away. The soldier who would have accompanied Rafael to the home of the Spanish lady, spun about ludicrously, coughing, and slumped down across the *mesero's* feet. The cigarette flew from his hand, and, striking squarely upon the curbing, rolled a few inches along the stone block. A little spiral of tobacco smoke blew upward from its tip in a curious design. To Rafael, it seemed to assume the contours of a mocking human face.

A sharp cry of terror broke from him. He spurned the tumbled body at his feet, and ran forward, carrying his tray level by force of habit. . . .

Then a sheet of lead cut through the street, with a sound like the buzzing of a thousand hornets, and the top half of Rafael Hernandez' head left its lower and stouter half, and fell forward into the tray.

For three strides, the action of the *mesero's* legs carried him forward, running, before the knees slumped and pitched him, with his grewsome burden, into the street.

Thus, for a short distance, Rafael Hernandez carried his head upon his tray, as he had promised; but as neither the proprietor of *El Globo* nor the Spanish lady who missed her dinner, knew anything about it, it is likely that Rafael's satisfaction, if it is possible for him to dwell upon it, is tinged with bitterness.

It was the proprietor's turn to chuckle.

Pleased by this exchange of compliments, Rafael strode briskly forward along the sidewalk. He walked with the easy swaying gait of a *mesero* carrying dinner to a Spanish lady. Behind him, but in the distance, the infernal rattle of machine guns persisted, punctuated at intervals by the heavier roar of rifle volleys. Suddenly it occurred to Rafael that the uproar was increasing in volume; that it was coming nearer. He was seized with quick panic. He walked more hurriedly, intent upon reaching and rounding the corner. It was a long block.

In a doorway, at the corner that was his immediate objective stood a soldier, smoking a cigarette. It was impossible to say to which side he belonged. As the *mesero* passed him, the soldier spoke sharply.

"Where are you going?"

"I am carrying her dinner to a Spanish lady," said Rafael, politely.

"A Spanish lady? Good! I shall go with you."

The soldier now smiled pleasantly, deeply inhaled, and blew a graceful cloud of smoke into the sunshine.

"My friend!" protested the *mesero*. "My friend—"

A company of soldiers appeared at



# Battle

BY MAXWELL ARMFIELD.

The stars in their courses  
Are fighting all the way;  
Across the lonely waste of sky  
They set them in array.  
With dim lethargic forces  
They war both night and day.

The stars in their courses  
Will fight for you and me  
As once they brought to Israel  
Above that Eastern sea,  
Against chaotic forces,  
An ordered harmony.

The rhythm of the universe  
They wield for sword, so strong  
That every little cloud of black  
That idly drifts along  
A formless way, with aim perverse,  
Is shapen into song.

We shall be shapen so. We too,  
With silent artistry,  
Into some universal chord  
Clear-colored like the sea,  
Woven forever through and through  
The starry symphony.

# Edgar Saltus: A Postscript

BY CARL VAN VECHTEN.

TWO phenomena, frequently recurring, are to be noted in the unfathomable history of American letters: one, the tremendous effect produced by comets whose effulgence for the time being completely eclipses the remainder of the literary milky way in the eyes of the public and the critics; and the other, the careless attitude assumed by these gentry towards the fixed stars. As a general rule, these true constellations are not observed at all until they have been shining for two or three decades, sometimes longer. When they are observed by their contemporaries, it is for the purpose of excoriating them for having the impertinence to pretend to shine.

Babbalanja, the mystical philosopher in Herman Melville's greatly underrated romance, "Mardi," has this to say of fame: "Not seldom to be famous, is to be widely known for what you are not, says Alla-Malolla. Whence it comes, as old Bardianna has it, that for years a man may move unnoticed among his fellows; but all at once, by some chance attitude, foreign to his habit, become a trumpet-full for fools; though, in himself, the same as ever."

Edgar Allan Poe, Herman Melville himself, and Ambrose Bierce, seemingly never struck this attitude and, as a consequence, they had to wait for fame until they could be admired for what they really were all the time.

I, too, have waxed epigrammatic on this theme: "Fame," I once wrote, "is

a quaint, old-fashioned body, who loves to be pursued. She seldom, if ever, runs after anybody except in her well-known role of necrophile."

On July 31, 1921, another illustrious obscurity in American letters, Edgar Saltus, died at the age of 63. A few book-collectors had found him out, but to the general public, although he had been writing since 1884 and had published over thirty books, his name is probably even less familiar than that of such a special figure as Ezra Pound or Paul Claudel. Will death bear him a belated laurel wreath?

## II.

In my paper in "The Merry-Go-Round," I do not think I understated or over-emphasized the case of Edgar Saltus. The neglect of this man is one of the most astounding phenomena in the scoriac history of our national literature. Benjamin de Casseres puts it thus: "There are three mysteries in American literature—the appearance of Edgar Allan Poe, the disappearance of Ambrose Bierce, and the burial alive of Edgar Saltus." A few months before he died, James Huneker wrote me: "Twenty years ago, Vance Thompson and I promised ourselves the pleasure of writing a definitive article on Edgar—and we didn't. Now you have done it and beautifully... Edgar is a genius. George Moore once told me that Walt Whitman and Saltus were the only two Americans he read." But let Mr. Moore, in a letter to me, speak for himself: "I

was especially interested in your review of Edgar Saltus, for it has always been a puzzle to me why he did not achieve a really memorable piece of work. I attach much importance to the writer's name; some people think undue importance. However that may be, Edgar Saltus seems at first sight an inspiring name, yet it did not inspire the owner. Edgar Saltus is cultivated and possessed by a brain and style—the equipment is perfect and we sit agape when we think of him."

Saltus was the son of Victor Hugo by Schopenhauer. Strange bedfellows these! Their marital antics have resulted in strange children. His fictions are experiments in decorative irony; they are pessimistic allegories. His best works in this form, "Mr. Incoul's Misadventure" and "The Truth About Tristrem Varick," both date from the eighties. The first shows how cruel a thing is abstract justice; the second exhibits a pursuit of the ideal, which lands the idealist in the electric chair. While these books are superior, even such flamboyant romances as "The Pace That Kills," "Madam Sapphira," and "A Transaction in Hearts" are lyric melodramas, written with ecstasy. There is about them something of the hard brilliant glitter of Webster and Tourneur.

Saltus experimented in history, fiction, poetry, literary criticism, and philosophy, but his masterpiece, of course, is "Imperial Purple." The soaring splendor of this book remained unsurpassed by its author. Indeed, it is rare in all literature. Page after page that Walter Pater, Oscar Wilde or J. K. Huysmans would have proudly

signed, might be set before you. The man writes with invention, with sap, with urge. The historical form has at last found a poet to render it supportable. Blood flows across the pages; slaughter and booty are the principal themes; and yet Beauty struts triumphant through the horror.

Late in life he tried to repeat this performance in his history of the Romanoffs, published as "The Imperial Orgy." I prefer Saltus's original title, "Imperial Sables." In this book, he deliberately shut his eyes to all extenuating circumstances. It reeks of gore. It is a lithograph printed in blood.

Of his style Oscar Wilde once remarked: "In Edgar Saltus's work, passion struggles with grammar on every page." It might, indeed, be said of him, as León Bloy wrote of Huysmans, that he dragged "his images by the heels or the hair up and down the worm-eaten staircase of terrified syntax." But, repeating this phrase, we should be wise to remember that "grammar" and "glamour" stem from the same root. Percival Pollard pictured Saltus as "an author drunken with his own phrases," "a dervish dancing in his prose." He never wrote from his heart; he seldom, indeed, wrote from his brain; he wrote with his nerves.

### III.

Of the man himself little is known. That much is not pleasant. He was an egoist, seldom with a good word for another author, sensitive, bitter, cynical, and at times, perhaps, even malicious. In the nineties he had known such men as Oscar Wilde, Edgar Fawcett and J. K. Huysmans. He knew then, too, Vance Thompson and James Huneker.

For the past twenty years, however, he had withdrawn from the world. He had few, if any, friends. Huneker in 1920 told me that he had not seen him for ten years. He appeared pretty regularly at the Manhattan Club in Madison Square for his mail and for a whisky and soda, until prohibition cut even this from him.

He was a strangely distinguished figure, something of a dandy, handsome in his youth, if one can judge from his pictures, and later, while more massive, still inspiring, short, but with the head of a personage. Curiously enough, he really *looked* like a man of letters. He is the only author I have ever seen who did.

There may have been reasons for his bitterness. I have heard that he suffered reverses of fortune in Wall Street, which necessitated alterations in his mode of living. Then, while he carefully and tenderly worked at his miniature jewelled masterpieces, he watched the glory go to his inferiors. Galling enough, no doubt. More than all, he stuttered, a physical affliction which cuts many softer personalities away from social intercourse.

I have set down a few plausible excuses for the unpleasant impression his manner and his conversation created when finally I met him. But, all the same, I do not think he had changed. In the early nineties, he was the same acidulous cynic, the same caustic wit. In 1891, his first wife divorced him. In an interview, published in a newspaper of the period, Saltus is quoted as saying

of his father-in-law, whom he blamed for the action, "I shall not forget Mr. Read. He shall have a divorce from my bed and board, the alimony for which he has asked as well. Now that the charges he made are withdrawn I can refuse him nothing. I have put him down in my will. He is a member of the Society for the Protection of Animals, and in recognition of his affection for beasts, I have left him a mirror—with reversion to his charming representatives at the bar." It also must be remembered, in any consideration of his philosophy, that "The Philosophy of Disenchantment," "The Anatomy of Negation," "Mr. Incoul's Misadventure," and "The Truth About Tristrem Varick," even the titles of which are revealing, were all published in the eighties. He was born doubting the world and its women. Nevertheless, it seems that he was married three times!

Thus we must accept him in his own trenchant humor. He was sufficiently inhuman so that he could not create a human character. But this is not dispraise. It is exact description of his morbid, erotic art, often inspiring dread and amazement, but never pity. His extraordinary style, of which he was master from his first book (a study of Balzac) insures him readers, who will now doubtless flock to him in greater numbers. And it will be no surprise to his admirers to find him finally allotted a definite niche in American literature, somewhere between those occupied by Edgar Allan Poe and William Dean Howells.



## Jazz

BY JOHN McCLURE.

*With trombones snarling  
And rattling drum,  
Brass pans clanging,  
The jongleurs come.*

*There goes Adam  
Who will not die!  
Thunder of kettledrum  
Leads him by.*

*(Babylon is dead and gone  
Thirty centuries:  
Adam beat a kettledrum  
There like this.)*

*With trombones snarling  
And clanging brass,  
Cymbals and kettledrums,  
The jongleurs pass.*

## Agatha

BY LOUIS GILMORE.

*Agatha has  
A white room  
With hangings  
Of China silk  
And pastorals  
In porcelain  
On the mantle.*

*In a bandbox  
On a top shelf  
Of a closet  
In the wall  
Are curious  
Images.*

## Reviews

### "CONCORD, MASS., 1840-1860"

(A Piano Sonata by Charles E. Ives.)

THERE is much "tumult and shouting" about the American composer and American music, much calling upon the heavens to witness that the great cause of star-spangled opera and symphony has suffered from neglect at the hands of impresarios and conductors, much dark muttering against sinister foreign influences that prevent our own eaglets from singing their just and due songs from proscenium arch and concert platform. Sometimes the American composer himself joins in the outcry to the decided impairment of his dignity and the dignity of music in general.

Music is always just music, neither American music, nor French music, nor Spanish music, but *music*—the universal voice of thought and feeling on a high plane—taking on sometimes the accidental color and characteristics of immediate surroundings. Its *national* character is but a superficial difference in idiom—rhythm, harmony and melodic contour. No serious musical mind can be interested in the *applique* of Indian or negro characteristics as artificial decorations of compositions which do not spring from an Indian or negro manner of thinking. On the other hand any effort which goes deeper into some mode of thought or manner of living essentially and exclusively American must interest as a movement in the direction of artistic integrity. Again, it would not be the "national" characteristics which would have value, save

as they grew flowerlike from bole and branch,—it would be the value of some unique phase of our North American life brought to artistic expression . . . In the midst of all the furore, critical and uncritical, about contemporary music, one is rather stunned to discover a new composer who has quietly written three symphonies, four violin sonatas, a string quartet, two suites for orchestra, two piano sonatas and two hundred and fifty songs. One is still more interested when one is informed that the composer is a Yale graduate, a pupil of Horatio Parker and that he was "raised on Bach and Beethoven." The interest becomes astonishment when printed score of one of the larger works reveals music unlike anything one has seen before—a broad, strong and original style with no recognizable derivations from Debussy, Strauss or Stravinsky. You will look in vain through publisher's catalogs or concert programs or the anecdotal columns of self-advertising—you will not find the name of Charles Ives, composer of the monumental piano sonata which bears the unusual title, "Concord, Mass., 1840-60."

The sonata appears in a handsome, cloth-bound volume of seventy-two pages. Concerning it and his ideas about it, the composer writes: "The sonata is an experiment which perhaps goes too far. It was not written primarily to be played—certainly not to be played with two hands. This is the first of a series which I propose to have similarly printed and thrown at the music fraternity—chancing that a few

may be interested. In this way, you see, no one has to buy the music, sell it, play it, or listen to it—except with both eyes open; there is no audience to throw things at the performer or the composer; the artist does not have to risk his reputation, nor the publisher his capital, and the music public is left in peace to work out its own salvation (whatever that means), and I to do the same without disturbing anyone but the neighbors."

From the Knickerbocker Press comes a volume by Mr. Ives called "Essays Before a Sonata," which is inscribed—"These prefatory essays were written by the composer for those who can't stand his music—and the music for those who can't stand his essays, to those who can't stand either, the whole is respectfully dedicated."

The sonata is divided into four movements entitled in order, *Emerson*, *Hawthorne*, "*The Alcotts*," *Thoreau*. The essays announce that the whole is an attempt to present one person's impression of the spirit of transcendentalism that is associated in the mind of many with Concord, Mass., of over a half century ago. This is undertaken in impressionistic pictures of Emerson and Thoreau, a sketch of the Alcotts and a Scherzo supposed to reflect a lighter quality which is often found in the fantastic side of Hawthorne. The first and last movements do not aim to give any program of the life, or of any particular work, of either Emerson or Thoreau, but rather composite pictures or impressions. They are, however, so general in outline that from some viewpoints, they may be as far from accepted impressions (from true conceptions,

for that matter) as the valuation which they purport to be of the influence of the life, thought, and character of Emerson and Thoreau is inadequate.

Turning to the book we find a score without time or key signature and no measure divisions. Certain rhythmical divisions supply guidance. The music is broad and stately, the rhythmic arches are very wide. No fixed tonality, no rhythmic unity. It sways as freely as a tree top in the wind. Indeed there is no unity of idea in the sense that one part grows out of another. One feels only a psychic kind of connection that might in this case reasonably be called a musical logic. The Emerson movement is as majestic and free as clouds with the certainty of carved bronze. It is enormously difficult to play. It is truly doubtful if the composer meant it to be played—many places require a rearrangement or recasting unless an extra player is utilized.

Themes and chords move against and over each other in the style of chordal counterpoint met with in Casella. Again there are passage complexities offering as much resistance to digital solution as those of Malipiero. The effects resemble those of neither of these composers. The only resemblance the writer finds to any composer is in the Emerson movement when certain contours recall Strauss. Even this is a resemblance that strikes the eye rather than the ear.

This first movement is not pianistic—little of the sonata is—probably no effort was made to make any part of it pianistic. It must have been conceived abstractly. One misses, almost through-

out familiar pianistic outlines. In reading it away from the piano there is almost the feeling of perusing an orchestral score. The hand does not unconsciously grope for the keyboard. Yet many purely pianistic effects are contrived and effectively used. The beauty of this division of the work is severe and difficult. It is a beauty of high and remote things. It is austere. It is informed with the stark and ascetic beauty of lonely and alien reaches of human imagination.

The second movement given to Hawthorne "does not attempt the fundamental part of Hawthorne which has to do with the influence of sin upon the conscience, but tries to suggest some of the wilder, fantastical adventures into the half-child life, half-fairy life fantastical realms." The entire movement is fantastic in the extreme—light and delicate for the most part—and depends for a fine interpretation on the player's familiarity with and understanding of Hawthorne's place in the world of strange, elfish and supernatural things. Some pages of *Hawthorne*, like some pages of the *Emerson*, are not practical for one player, such as Page 25 which requires combination of notes to be held down with a block of wood for the production of harmonic effects. There are occasional measure divisions in this movement. On pages 40 and 41 is a climax of Ornstein-like fury but used to finer purpose.

"*The Alcotts*" is the shortest movement, only five pages and is in every way the simplest. It boasts occasional time signatures and, for a few lines on the first page, a key signature of two flats in the right hand and four in the left.

There is a simple quiet beauty about "*The Alcotts*." It and the *Hawthorne* are more obviously successful, because more *external* than either *Emerson* or *Thoreau*.

The Thoreau movement, closing the sonata, is perhaps even more difficult to understand than the Emerson movement, certainly more difficult to play. But as a portrait of the man, a re-creation of his way of thinking, a meditation upon him and his life and his thought, a resultant philosophical attitude of mind in the reader, it is finer and more successful than *Emerson*. It is close in texture, more pianistically playable, than *Emerson*, and perhaps holds the interest better. For a few lines there is opportunity to use a flute. It seems better to the writer to permit this to remain an abstraction as its introduction breaks the mood. Most of the movement exists in a superb twilight and is, according to the composer's directions, to be played in a lower dynamic ratio.

Is it a great work? Is it successful? Is this a direction music may legitimately take? Each student must answer these questions for himself. There will be as many reactions as there are individuals coming in contact with it—probably all of them different. One asks in turn: What do you demand of music? What do you get out of it? *What equipment, literary, philosophical and musical do you bring to it?*

The composer admits that perhaps his experiment has gone too far. Most interestingly, he wishes to have another try at it.

But no serious student, having as a background a knowledge of the amazing



achievements of modern music can help feeling that Mr. Ives' sonata is a piece of work sincerely done, and if a failure, a rather splendid one.

Certainly it must be considered in a class by itself. Conceived independently of any instrumental idiom, it must be regarded as an essay of lofty thought and feeling expressed in musical notation. One arises from a reading of it with much, much more of satisfaction than dissatisfaction. Its loftiness of purpose is evident; its moments of achievement elevating and greatly beautiful.

HENRY BELLAMANN.

### A RECENT MOTLEY

"Things That Have Interested Me," by Arnold Bennett. (*George H. Doran Co.*)

"Authors and I," by C. Lewis Hind. (*John Lane Co.*)

"Books on the Table, by Edmund Gosse. (*Scribner's.*)

"Impressions and Comments; Second Series," by Havelock Ellis. (*Houghton, Mifflin Co.*)

"The Art of Letters," by Robert Lynd. (*Scribner's.*)

"The Sacred Wood," by T. S. Eliot. (*Alfred A. Knopf.*)

**C**OLLECTING is being done this year; rather overdone, in fact. Collections of poems, essays, reviews, paragraphs, comments, odds and ends—the by-products of certain more or less eminent authors—are being hastily gathered together between attractive covers and thrust upon an un-

suspecting public. Authors who undoubtedly know better, have succumbed to this disease, this collectomania, which is raging unchecked in the literary world. One can almost see them—methodically or frantically, according to temperament—emptying pigeonholes, going through old trunks and boxes, standing on ladders before dusty topshelves in the hope of discovering old diaries or notebooks or forgotten scribbles. When these are not available the dauntless author makes up a book of choice selections recently published in the magazines. One qualification only seems necessary for a 'collected' book—it must be scrappy, disjointed, hard, to read.

Arnold Bennett is an offender with his "Things That Have Interested Me" (*George H. Doran Co.*) An alluring title. One buys such a book instinctively. (Canny Mr. Bennett!) Remembering the sheer delight so often given in the past by Mr. Bennett, one can—perhaps—be unselfishly glad that he was interested. But why, *why*? One hates to think less of the author of "The Old Wives Tale" but—really, the less said the better. This is the sort of literary *faux pas* that his admirers are anxious to forget.

Mr. C. Lewis Hind has been collecting also. "Authors and I" (*John Lane Co.*) is the result of his search. There are impressions of fifty-eight authors, one impression apiece, and two impressions of Mr. Hind by way of a conclusion. Henry Adams, Gabriele d'Annunzio, Bret Harte, W. E. Henley, Alice Meynell, Tolstoy, Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Walt Whitman are among the number

discussed. It is a neat, chatty book, designed to give one the pleasantly superior feeling of moving easily in good company. At times it is inclined to be facetious and it is distressingly whimsical.

Then there is Edmund Gosse. His "Books on the Table" (Scribner's) is interesting, even delightful in spots, though the sketches it contains are unsatisfactorily short—"miniature monographs," he calls them. But taken as a whole, as a book, it is annoying. The sketches are too brief, the transition from Pascal to Mrs. Asquith is too rapid, and there are so many of these transitions. It leaves one with a slightly dazed feeling, tired, as though one had come out from the midst of much confusion, from a place where many people talked at once on unrelated subjects and here and there one had caught snatches of the conversations. There is a sketch on Count D'Orsay's portraits. What a gracious figure of romance he was, as much to his own day as to ours. A certain glamour surrounded him always—even at the last, in adversity—Byron's "Cupidon dechainé," with his great charm, his beauty, his talents.

Havelock Ellis' "Impressions and Comments, Second Series" (Houghton Mifflin Co.) is a sort of "mutilated diary." There seems more reason for its publication than for that of most books of the kind. Mr. Ellis goes behind the outside of many things, of everyday things which one is accustomed to take for granted, and reveals their curious beauty. A haunting loveliness which is, after all, quite simple and

obvious, but which often remains unperceived for lack of someone to point it out—someone of Mr. Ellis' keenness and broad sympathies. Take for instance, this passage upon hard facts. "As one grows older one's attitude towards facts changes. One begins to see through them. So far from being hard they now seem remarkably soft, even when one thinks one has, with much trouble, succeeded at last in finding them. The most boldly statistical facts are shifting every moment, and they are the most relatively solid of all facts; even when it seems not so, they are still susceptible of endlessly different interpretations. You can stick your fist through them at any point. The only hard facts one learns to see as one gets older, are the facts of feeling. Emotion and sentiment are, after all, incomparably more solid than any statistics. So that when one wanders back in memory through the field of life one has traversed, as I have, in diligent search of hard facts, one comes back bearing in one's arms a Sheaf of Feelings. They after all are the only facts hard enough to endure as long as life itself endures."

Mr. Robert Lynd's contribution to this year's collections is "The Art of Letters" (Scribner's). It is not so good as his "Old and New Masters". One hesitates to say that it is not good at all, for it is a sober, conscientious, painstaking effort, a very worthy book, no doubt, but tiresome—very tiresome. Mr. Pepys, William Cowper, The Office of the Poets, The Politics of Swift and Shakespeare, Tennyson, Oscar Wilde and Professor Irving Babbitt are among

the variety of subjects dealt with in these essays. Mr. Lynd's book is thoughtful, it is sincere, it is well written, its subject matter is undeniably interesting, yet it lacks some vital thing. It all seems very far away and hopelessly long ago—even Mr. Babbitt—and one's attention is not held. Is it that in most of the essays one misses the leaven of the author's personality?

Not one of this year's collections is in any way comparable to Mr. T. S. Eliot's fine book of last year, "The Sacred Wood." That was a collection of critical essays with an authentic *raison d'être*. One would not complain of collectomania if it resulted in more books of that kind. But, as it is, one complains bitterly. Attracted by an author's name or by an enticing paragraph or title one buys these unnatural books—and repents at leisure.

ALICE SESSUMS LEOVY.

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### EDGAR A. POE, A STUDY

By JOHN W. ROBERTSON, M. D.

(Bruce Brough, San Francisco, 1921.)

**A** BIT incoherently, a bit garrulously, and with a frankly biased enthusiasm, the last word on Poe would seem to have been written. If this seems too strong, then let us say the penultimate word. For years, as Harrison, one of his biographers, pointed out, the necessity has been for a thorough and scientific diagnosis of Poe's case by a competent neurologist. Dr. Robertson of the Livermore Sanitarium, San Francisco, a Poe enthusiast and collector, has furnished this diagnosis. Physically, the book is enormous

—428 pages, royal octavo—but it is all here. Under cataracts of rhetoric and cloudbursts of denunciation, the truth bears up and makes itself evident. Griswold, Baudelaire, Lauvriere, Woodberry, all come in for a share of the doctor's withering criticism, particularly Griswold, Poe's executor and villifier, who is dubbed throughout "the unfaithful servant who betrayed his trust"—and this is quite the mildest thing the doctor says about him.

The volume is divided into two parts, a psychopathic study and a bibliographic study. In the former, there is no palliation of Poe's derelictions or of the flagrant nature of his discourtesies to his contemporaries. Dr. Robertson, a specialist in dipsomania, treats frankly and scientifically of Poe the dipsomaniac, the victim of hereditary compulsion, the neurotic, the genius. He says:

"A study of Poe's heredity and life work makes it plain that many of Griswold's allegations, even when true, cannot justly be charged against Poe, but rather against his morbid heredity. If this seems too fine a distinction, at least we must recognize the fact that, by reason of this heredity, Poe was not always to be held responsible either for his words or his acts, for his great accomplishments or his lapses, heredity was as much responsible for the one as for the other; his heritage was pregnant with both good and evil."

Follows then a re-statement of the life of Poe, beginning with his ancestors, in which many errors are corrected and many new facts adduced. There is a touch of the Puritan about the doctor that makes him a bit preachy when he refers to Poe's "moral delinquencies





and alcoholic excesses," and a bit apologetic when he explains them away by the psychopathic method, but for the most part he is just and not too intolerant of the "evil" so inextricably mixed with his hero's "good." And he very properly despises the professional Poe apologists, while heartily abusing the colder-blooded biographers who sought to justify the Griswold charges. In short, he proves conclusively that Poe was neither the Jekyll of Gill nor the Hyde of Griswold. One does not entirely agree with the doctor, however, in his obvious belief that biographers should avoid the indiscretions and foibles of their subjects, and paint only their triumphs and greatnesses. It may not be important to know that Keats took snuff, but it is interesting, while the dyspeptic foibles of Carlyle as revealed by Froude are of distinct critical and biographical value. When the derelictions or follies of a public character as written down are falsehoods, however, even exaggerations, the case calls for a champion of a lively mettle; and Poe has found his champion in Dr. Robertson.

The doctor's onslaught upon Griswold is a delight; his description of him, classic. It reminds one of Poe. That Griswold was a reptile is very well proven indeed. Others who feel the point of the doctor's pen are Woodberry, Dr. Moran, Baudelaire and Lauvriere, although none of these are abused. Woodberry is shown to have been unsympathetic if not antipathetic, Moran to have been too gallant and a bit unscrupulous, and the French writers to have done Poe a disservice while endeavoring to do him a service. There is

some excellent criticism in the doctor's remarks on the critical attitudes of Baudelaire and Lauvriere, although one warms to the former, whose stand (with reference to the Griswold allegations) was an eloquent shrug and a "What then?"

The second part of the volume comprehends a complete and valuable bibliography of Poe. It is, however, like no other bibliography under the canopy. The doctor is a book collector, be it remembered, a Poe collector in particular, and he is a loquacious individual. Whole pages and more intervene frequently between the chronologically listed items; these are devoted by the ardent collector to essays on book collecting, and detailed narratives of his discovery of certain rare numbers and his joy thereat. He mentions his bookseller friends who have sold him the volumes, and with his arm across their shoulders describes their shops and mourns the Thackeray items he would have liked to have bought. He conducts exciting rows with the authors of the biographies and commentaries. He rambles. He meanders. He sails boats in the bath tub and slides down cellar doors. He enjoys himself immensely. After a while he gets around to the next item on the list. But it is all very cordial and genial, his adjectives are rampant, and he is nothing if not enthusiastic.

This big, sprawling "study" (excellently printed and bound, by the way) is an admirable companion, and a genuinely important contribution to Poe *ana*. It is not nearly as formidable as it looks, and while undoubtedly the long disquisitions and the relentless reminiscence of the second part have no place



in the volume, one would not like to see the volume otherwise. Let the second edition be abridged and furnished with an index, and issued at a lower price; the present edition will always delight the collector.

VINCENT STARRETT.

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## AND THE SPHINX SPOKE.

By PAUL ELDRIDGE.

(The Stratford Co., 1921.)

**B**ENJAMIN DE CASSERES has written an admirable introduction to this book, in which he hails Paul Eldridge as a spirit as rare as Poe, Baudelaire, or Leopardi.

"In his exquisitely chiselled imprecations," Mr. DeCasseres says, referring to "Vanitas," Paul Eldridge's book of poems which was published by the Stratford Company last year, "I recognized a man who was of their high aristocratic lineage; one who existed on their spiritual and intellectual plane; one who was heir to the Dreadful Vision; one who had ripped the veil from the face of Isis—and who was not afraid."

All that Mr. De Casseres says of Paul Eldridge is good. I shall return to it. His praise of the author of "Vanitas," and of "And the Sphinx Spoke" is high praise, but I do not think he has said a word too much.

Paul Eldridge has ripped the veil from the face of Isis. And yet to me the interesting thing about his work is not that it shows that he has ripped that veil away; many, as a matter of fact, have ripped it away, and many stare at

the Sphinx with as unblinking an eye as Paul Eldridge. The interesting thing to me is his reaction to the vision malefic.

Most men see in the futility of existence an excellent justification for cakes and ale. Paul Eldridge draws the deduction that "life is mud." He does not seem to have entered as yet those pleasant pastures on the further side of Nihilism where nothing matters the quirk of a cow's tail anyhow, evil is as futile as good, and, between two well-recognized futilities, one may as well choose the pleasanter. Arch-pessimism, arch-nihilism is the most comfortable condition in the world. Paul Eldridge seems to be reading the primer of pessimism. He is in that slough of despond out of which have sprung some of the most beautiful artistic productions we know.

And as a matter of fact, we can be grateful for his despondency. Ten years ago, when Paul Eldridge was an optimist, he could not write.

"And the Sphinx Spoke" is a volume of prose tales and prose fancies, of which Mr. De Casseres says in his introduction: "The stories and prose poems in this book are among the unique things in American literature." Some of them are, certainly. Paul Eldridge is a rare artist, an artist for America to be proud of. He is a strange spirit, a fly-by-night sort of an elf, who takes on more and more importance. His imagery, his deftness at words, when he is at his best, is magnificent. I quote one image from this book: "The old woman lay outstretched in the unpolished coffin... The room was still

very neat. The old woman had always been a very fine housekeeper. She would raise her bony, bent body as some thin dog that stands on his hind legs, and would clean every speck upon the walls and the humble furniture."

In the volume I like best "Paradise Regained," "An Old Woman Falling Asleep," "Dead Leaves" (because it contains the image quoted above and some others), "Crosses," and the excellent "Pastels," which make up the last part of the book.

"The Chinese Doll," (which Mr. De Casseres says is "one of the most powerful and most perfect things in any literature—neither Baudelaire nor Poe has ever done anything better") is a very gruesome conception, well done, and certainly powerful. I do not like it. I prefer not to read it again. This reaction itself is a tribute to the artist, perhaps. Poe's "Bernice" is a masterly production, I dare say, but I skip it when I read his tales.

Some of the book, in my opinion, is dull, and a good deal of it ordinary. I am not impressed by "The Golden Wedding," "A Culpit," "Their Dreams," "Time," "Three Men," or "Worms and Butterflies," tales which fill a good many pages.

I am quite sure that Paul Eldridge, as yet, is at his best in his verse. But when his work is done, quite probably he will have produced an equal amount of prose and verse, both equally good. He is not, after all, it seems to me, attempting particularly to write verse or particularly to write prose: he is expressing in the appropriate medium the crowding conceptions of a rare imagination. It is perhaps the conception in

all his work, rather than the technique or the medium, though his technique is often exquisite, which gives it charm. He is a man of ideas, an artist of ideas.

No bad work he has done or may do—and I am sure he has done, like everyone else, some very wretched stuff—can detract from the magnificent bits of pessimism and of beauty which he has scattered here and there in "Vanitas," in magazines and in "And the Sphinx Spoke." Those who desire to familiarize themselves with what is best in contemporary American letters, cannot overlook Paul Eldridge. His best work stands.

And some of it is in "And the Sphinx Spoke."

"The ten thousand worth writing for," to whom Mr. De Casseres refers, will want this book and Paul Eldridge's next one.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## WILLOW POLLEN.

By JEANNETTE MARKS.

(The Four Seas Company, 1921.)

The chief strength of the work in this volume of poems, I believe, lies in descriptive phrases, words that materialize sensory visions. The author is not an adept in the art of verse. There are excellent "high spots" of expression in the book and there is magic in at least two of the poems, "Ebony" and "Two Candles." But generally one's impression of the volume is likely to be that the conceptions, often extremely good, are not done justice in the handling. The author has a fertile and a

poetic imagination. The weakness of the work is in form and not in content.

Of the poems I like best "Ebony," "Two Candles," "Willow Pollen," "The Railroad Station," "Peddled Joy," "Journey's End," "Thatch," "Ravello," "Gold and Ivory."

There are excellent lines in poems which I have not named:

"In the afternoon  
Shaken light burns in the memory of her  
hair."

from "Proem," and

"How shall a tinker mend  
A pinch of dust?"

from "Everywhere," and a score of others.

The conceptions are frequently beautiful. The technique is, too often, unsatisfactory. My impression of the volume as a whole is one almost of formlessness. I feel a lack of artistry.

By form, it goes without saying, I do not mean meter and rhyme. A good line in verse is as easily recognizable as a good line on canvas. It may be too delicately modulated to scan just as a curve may be too exquisitely undulating to be a parabola. Beauty of form is something that cannot be measured precisely in either the vocal or graphic arts. It is a matter of instinct or intuition. Form may be superb in *vers libre*—Adelaide Crapsey and Ezra Pound, and Walt Whitman before them, have proved that. But it is a necessity in all good art. A definite, unfaltering and adequate stroke must be evident in the delineation of the idea.

In general I fail to detect form, as a beautiful thing in itself, in "Willow Pollen." Some of the lines are beauti-

ful. All honor to them. Some of the conceptions are beautiful, and a beautiful conception of course is better than beautiful form that is empty. But the body of the work in "Willow Pollen" seems almost formless. The general impression is vague and diffused. One feels that the poet must, in order to give us what we treasure most in verse, work toward a firmer technique.

"Willow Pollen" is a good book. I recommend it to readers of poetry. But it could have been better. Jeannette Marks could have made it better.

JOHN MCCLURE.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

BRASS: *A Novel of Marriage*, by Charles G. Norris (E. P. Dutton Co.)

SECOND APRIL, by Edna St. Vincent Millay (Mitchell Kennerly).

THE NARROW HOUSE, by Evelyn Scott (*Boni and Liveright*).

BLIND MICE, by C. Kay Scott (George H. Doran Co.)

THE GREAT WAY, by Horace Fish (Mitchell Kennerly).

THE STORY OF A POET: MADISON CAWEIN, by Otto A. Rothert (*Filson Club Publications*: No. 30, Morton & Co., Louisville, Ky.)

GARMENTS OF PRAISE, by Florence Converse (E. P. Dutton Co.)

COINS AND MEDALS, by Charlotte Hardin (*The Four Seas Co.*)

FAGOTS OF FANCY, by Scottie McKenzie Frasier (*Progressive Publisher*, Wheeling, W. Va.)

DICTIONARY OF SLANG AND COLLOQUIAL, ENGLISH (Abridged), by John S. Farmer & W. E. Henley (*London Geo. Rutledge & Sons, Ltd. New York, E. P. Dutton Co.*)

EDGAR ALLEN POE: *How To Know Him*, by C. Alphons Smith (*Bobbs-Merrill Co.*)

And several others reviewed in this issue.

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## SHOP TALK

**D**ESPITE detractors, wiseacres, a lean purse and its name (so offensive to pharisees) *THE DOUBLE DEALER* goes forward. Our friends are, in the manner of friends, magnanimous. Our enemies bruit us bravely. What more can we ask? And yet the months of August and September—dog days in journalism—have been quick with press notices, for the most part, pleasant.

Mr. Mencken, in the August number of *Smart Set*, in an article, "The South Begins to Mutter," has a deal to say pro and con *The D. D.* To our credit, be it stated, though with all due modesty, mostly pro. Mr. Finger, in *Alls Well* for September, good-naturedly but very solemnly, controverts Mr. Mencken's remarks, but gets us "all wrong" when, in speaking of *The Reviewer* (Richmond) and our own *D. D.*, he says: "In those behind these institutions I see the modern prototypes of men who, three centuries ago, gave their bodies to be burned with peculiar obstinacy rather than deny or affirm the royal supremacy." We smirk. If Mr. Finger could meet the bunch down here, he would arrive at quite another conclusion.

The August *Current Opinion* quotes poems from our June issue by William Alexander Percy and William Griffith. The September number of the same magazine reprints in full Vincent Starrett's "How Felipe Looked Out of a Window," the first of a series of "Little Tales of Mexico" (the second story appears in this issue) calling it, "a mordant little tale, full of local color and sardonic humor, told with an art that reminds one of Maupassant." Further on in its pages one's attention is arrested by an article captioned "New Mutterings in Southern Literature," devoted to a rehash of the Mencken-Finger debate, wherein *The D. D.* is meted its dole of crumbs.

Editorials in Richmond, Atlanta, Santa Fe, Chicago and New York papers: quotations of poems, such as J. Vandervoort Sloan's "Life and Sleep" by New York and Washington dailies; press and periodical comment, decidedly encouraging, from Frisco to Dublin, complete a very catholic and stimulating spread. But we are not apt to be deluded, nor in any manner influenced, by anything whatever that has been said about us. We know our play. The critics and the public have, like good Mr. Finger, "got us wrong." Wait a bit and see.

Meanwhile we pledge an entertaining number for November. Babette Deutch comes in with two excellent and daring poems; Vincent Starrett with a notable appraisal, "The Passing of James Branch Cabell"; Arthur Symons with an article on modern violinists; Edith Chapman, Israel Solon and Lafcadio Hearn (posthumously) contribute stories; Alfred Kreymborg, John V. A. Weaver and Stephen Ta Van, essays; Carl Sandburg, Edward Sapir, John McClure, Alice Corbin Henderson and Laura Benet, poetry; and perhaps, though not yet agreed, we may decide to print an unpublished story by Hubert Crackanthorpe, "A Fellside Tragedy." A variety of victuals, food for all minds. In army parlance—"Come and get it."

THE D. D.

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."

ONE has but to glance over the columns of the local press to become aware of the astonishing activities which are taking place in that section of New Orleans familiarly known as the Vieux Carré. Whereas, a walk down the Rue Royale would do more than confirm the impression that present-day New Orleans has at length begun to recognize the charm and possibilities of the "old town." Certainly nowhere in this country may one discover environs at once so quaint and colorful. The native Latin note, always so conspicuous in the South's metropolis, hereabouts fairly captivates you. A fine sort of old world flavor insinuates itself as you cross the Rue Bien-ville in your Royal progress toward La Maison Morphy, L'Ombre de la Cathedral, the Cabildo, the Place d'Armes, and Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre in the lower Pontalba building.

For some moons it has been my design to call attention in these pages to the admirable work being done by the Little Theater group in New Orleans. Now in its third winter this coterie of enthusiastic amateurs has met with a reception which, I believe, far exceeds any they had counted upon. Withal, a reception well-earned, well-deserved. When an altruistic enterprise becomes not only a social, but a financial success, one begins to conjecture upon the dubious possibilities of kindred undertakings.

The formal opening of La Maison Morphy marks the inception of another creditable and, one hazards, not inauspicious adventure into the limbo of dilettantedom. Your *flaneur* of today unlike your *beau* of yesterday, prefers (or, *nolens volens*, pretends to prefer) small talk and tea to gusto and whisky. Today's *flaneurs* being, for the most part feminine, bless them, and whisky, of course, taboo, one is inclined to protest with Browning that "God's, etc."—begging your indulgence, Mrs. Nietzsche!

Returning to La Maison Morphy. Within its hallowed precincts dwelt for a time and died one Paul Morphy, King of the king of games, chess champion extraordinary. Always a strange lad, fey from the first, he early displayed that peculiarly uncanny brilliance which ordinarily spells madness or a premature end to its possessor. So, this old building which was originally the home of the *Banque de la Louisiane*, the first bank in the Mississippi Valley, constructed twelve decades ago, has been carefully and ingeniously rehabilitated and dedicated to the memory of this Morphy, whose father's residence it became during the forties and fifties.

Herein are assembled four separate businesses, videlicet—The Patio Royal, a tea room; Chic Parisien, a distinctive French establishment (lingerie, etc.); the Paul Morphy Book Shop, and Gal-lup, Inc., interior decorators. Of the

quartet, I find the book shop most to my taste. Your pardon, Mesdames and Messieurs, but my knowledge of lingerie, cuisine and decorative values is, I confess, quite restricted. May all success attend your ventures and judging from the brave array of pulchritude exhibited on your premises the gay *Sieur du Success* will not be long in finding his way to your doors.

But the book shop! One sees or seems to see in such a shop the commencement of a new regime in lettered *Nouvelle Orleans*. The place has all the charm of an artist's rendezvous with perhaps the one pleasant failing of freshness and femininity. However, by this very token, it achieves an atmosphere which might be found lacking in a more perfunctory, less feminine establishment. Books there are here and about, bidding you peep behind their gaudy jackets. In time, of course, there will be a larger array, rarer and more diversified—first editions, association items, Americana, incunabula, preciosa, etc.—but all in time. Here, in any event, is a valiant beginning and one that deserves all the encouragement we shamefully diffident Southerners (when it comes to things literary) can give it.

What the South, and in a lesser degree New Orleans, needs more than modern office buildings, large industries, giant factories, bloated commerce and frenzied finance (with all due respect to their significance) is just what the persons behind the Little Theater movement, the Quartier, Arts and Crafts, and Bridle goose Clubs, the lecture courses, *La Maison Morphy* and *THE DOUBLE DEALER* are giving it or

trying to give it without thought of profit and applause. But interdependence as ever prevails, and quixotically constructive enterprises depending, more or less, upon the support of the community's *intelligentsia*, must either receive this support or sink into the Sisyphusean futility of finer things.



## WIND AND WEATHERCOCKS

THE other evening I saw a long-heralded picture. The cumulative impression left the audience a little more ardently certain that bloodshed as a remedy for international disorders is about as effective as a baseball bat for an irritating and howling infant. But—and this I am after—the story carried along with it a character called "The Prophet", who symbolized what I name for want of a more extensively appealing term, Love—man-love for his fellowman. And the last picture on the last reel was a close-up of the face of this good prophet. And the haunting eyes were those of a fanatic!

It is significant that the audience loved the prophet. Throughout the picture the audience was awed by the prophet. Quite properly conservative heads wagged approval when he preached by indirection his revolution. Yet this prophet was a fanatic, as the rare teachers of the ages were fanatics, as a few men and women today are whom we deem unfortunate because we think them so. If we met the same folks on the street, heard them speak, saw their wild unseeing, nonetheless—some of them—deeply seeing, eyes, we'd snigger

at them, call them "fanatics," and give police headquarters a hurried ring.

One wonders why. Perhaps because we are afraid of new ideas. Because we shy at new ideas as a horse shies at a flying leaf, if we suspect they are the sort of ideas which threaten the animal comfort we call peace. If they suggest change. Did I say new ideas? Not necessarily new. Old, old ideas, as old as the Greeks, as old as the Jews, as old as the Heathen Chinese. We read Plato and applaud Socrates. We read the great books of history and applaud the Teachers. We see the picture and applaud the Prophet.

But Socrates, and the Teachers of revolutionary ideas since the world began, and the Prophet of the picture are comfortably remote. We can view them from a respectable distance. If they aren't fiction for us, they are merely history. "Lovely characters maybe, but a little *gone*, you know—up here—" and we tap our foreheads significantly. Were we to run across them on the city streets, we'd hemlock one, crucify the other, and summon the Lusk Commission, the Superintendent of Police, and the Department of Justice for the third. In great books, in the movies, our fervid fanatics can't step on our physical toes; but in the city streets they might. Remote, they are, lovable enough, and, indeed, sublime; near, they become a menace.

How we squirm from the pain, from the suffering, from the ever-present shame—God save the mark!—of change! How we love the animal comfort we call peace! What a miserable candleflame is our faith in ourselves which sputters out at the first faint

puff of a new idea—whether right or wrong, and it matters little—from the lips of a 'roused man! What a curious faith, to suppose that, somehow, new ideas are doomed once we refuse to admit we have them; once we have systematically slain fanatics who insist on drumming ideas into our imminently proper heads.

Renan wrote: "Forever will the contrast of the ideal with the sad reality produce in humanity those revolts against cold reason, which common minds call madness, until the day of their triumph, when those who have combated them are the first to acknowledge their lofty wisdom."

Perhaps, it was meant to be so in the beginning. Perhaps the world needs every one of its militant philistines; if only to give the great Teachers their chance. Perhaps the world needs all high-minded weathercocks, of little use in a windless hour; if only to indicate, one fine day now and then, that there really is a wind!



## THE PARTIALLY UNINHIBITED SOUTH

**L**OLA RIDGE, in a welcome letter to THE DOUBLE DEALER, parenthesizes an interesting conviction of hers concerning Southern inhibitions which seems a significant addendum to recent comment on the South by Editor Mencken. The letter will speak largely for itself, and I am venturing to print it in part—though Miss Ridge apologizes because she thinks it is "badly groomed" and doesn't know it is going to be used here. It is a signally "hopeful" letter, because it bears choice words not only for THE DOUBLE DEALER, but



also for the latterly much maligned literary South.

Miss Ridge writes: "The thing I like best about *THE DOUBLE DEALER* is its aliveness. (So many of the magazines are dead or, rather, desiccated—full of dry innocuous rot that doesn't even smell—just shakes on you its harmless scales). It's good that you exploit no school and that you have not reached the finality of decisions. With this you might easily fumble—yes, though perhaps you do fumble—but not timidly. You don't feel cautiously about, before daring to move; you plunge; and that you sometimes plunge in the wrong direction doesn't matter at all. (This reminds me that Southern people have not nearly so many inhibitions to contend with as Northern folks. They're not so self-conscious. Intellectually the Yankees are often free and bold—this is the secret of their leadership in nearly all reform movements—but emotionally they seem to have inherited British fear of being laughed at or disapproved of. Southerners have not this fear at all. Intellectually they seem to be in a state of arrested development. But their emotional spontaneity makes me feel sure that bigger and better artists will come out of the South. Probably, too, a revival of romanticism,—though growing intellectual awareness may give this a naturalistic or realistic cloak. Anyhow it will be romantic, for all their gestures are so. Even the hateful lynchings and ridiculous Ku Klux Klans are misdirected gestures of romanticism.)

"I've meandered off over the South and now I've forgotten what I wanted to say—oh yes, this: that from the first number of your magazine on, I

feel a continuous distinct thread of *personality* winding through and binding the conglomerate mass of stuff—some very good, some bad—that you print, and giving some sort of form to the whole. *THE DOUBLE DEALER* makes me think of a vigorous supple body that can give and take blows. It simply has to survive. If, for some reason, it ceased as *THE DOUBLE DEALER*, it would break out in another place and go on under some other form. This because the urge that gave it birth was primarily emotional. I don't only mean that none of you thought of any material gain—that goes without saying, for who ever made *anything* out of a literary magazine—but that it was a passionate gesture.

"Perhaps you won't agree with me at all, and I seem to have wandered a long way from *THE DOUBLE DEALER* in the above, but the only way to give you my real reaction was to think without choosing the particular thoughts to express."

How many of us in the South have ever hoped to see the day when the North would find anything promising in lynching and Ku Kluxing? And yet Miss Ridge's phrase, "misdirected gestures of romanticism," has its own illuminating pertinence.



## THE NEGLECT OF FORM

ONE would be tempted to say, after a survey of contemporary American books, that the greatest defect of our literature today is the neglect of form. The indictment applies less to the poets, whose sense of form alone makes poets of them, than to

the writers of prose. It is the latter (despite the fact that some verse writers maintain the idea alone is important) who seem particularly to have thrown form overboard. One realizes after a siege of reading that there are hardly a half dozen men in the democracy who are able, or even who endeavor, to write English beautifully and memorably, dressing their ideas in language worthy to endure.

One finds excellent situations or plots or conceptions, well worthy to be remembered. But that is generally all. The craftsmanship, the artistry that forces remembrance is too often lacking. The writer usually seems not even to have suspected the subtleties of his art or the importance of technique in literature. He seems never to have learned that cadence and harmony and rhythm are part of the art of prose. It is a pity, for his doctrine that the idea alone is important has deprived us of a great deal that would have delighted us and of many pleasant ideas which were dressed too poorly to live.

In the arts—rightly or wrongly—only those works are accorded merit which partake of a relative immortality. They must live for a little while. And, contrary to the vulgar opinion, an idea alone can scarcely survive for a generation. It must be encased in sheet armor to weather an age, or even a century. Form alone can carry it, for there is nothing so fragile as an idea. It can escape from the thinker himself in an instant. Unless he imprison it in a cage of some sort, it is lost forever. Polydarcus (and the world) lost a magnificent conception in the Aegean because he was seasick and could not write in his notebook.

An idea carelessly or inaptly phrased is forgotten at once by those who read it or is hopelessly garbled in passing from mouth to mouth. It can not survive. We notice that the perennial ideals and superstitions are preserved by beautiful form. Religion depends upon it. The style of the great teachers is superb and the prayerbooks and testaments of the immortal religions are very pleasant reading, even for a heathen, and very difficult to forget.

The artist, and the thinker no less, must rely absolutely on form for the perpetuation or the communication of emotion or idea. Form, of course, may be either image or word or sound, or a scaffolding of all these. But, whichever it be, the artist who desires either honor or immortality can acquire it only in perfection or beauty of form.

The true artist strives constantly and feverishly to imprison in supremely appropriate expression every idea, emotion or concept which he desires to perpetuate. It is form alone that lives, and though the writer's conceptions be more remarkable than anyone else's, unless he express them in appropriate or beautiful form, his grandchildren will be neither better nor wiser because of them.

It is regrettable enough when men strive for mastery of an art and fail. But it is worse when students of an art make no attempt to master it. In America today there seem to be few writers who have attempted at all to penetrate the mystery of form, which is the innermost mystery of literature as of all the arts. We look in our books for beautiful cadence, harmony and rhythm almost in vain.

## THE LITTLE THEATRE

**I**N theory, at least, a Little Theatre is a theatre without a box office. I say, in theory; because, oftener than not, the box office in the theatre is like Love in the proverb: Throw it out of the door, and it comes back by the window—a Comedy enacted in more than one American Little Theatre. Now, there are two kinds of box office; the box office of professional "Broadway," in which success is measured in dollars and cents,—especially dollars; and that other box office, in which success is measured by the uncritical applause of one's friends. Originally, a protest against the "Broadway" box office, the Little Theatre has constantly to be on guard against both box offices; that is, if it would not renounce its birthright for a mess of pot-

tage. "Anchorites do not dwell in theatres; and peacocks do not flourish in a cell," says Marianne Moore. The love of applause is as universal a failing as the love of money, and neither applause nor money is obtained in the theatre without some sacrifice.

But getting rid of the box office, is, as the phrase goes, destructive criticism. Grant that the box office has been got rid of. What then? The Little Theatre is in a position to enter into its birthright. It becomes a workshop, a laboratory for the conducting of experiments and the making of discoveries, a school for playwrights, actors, scene painters, costumers, electricians, and other workers in the theatre—a school, finally, of all those arts whose sum total, greater than its parts, becomes in the hands of Gordon Craig's ideal director the "Art of the Theatre."

Life is an onion with layers of illusion. Each layer stripped brings tears and when you tear off the last layer, where is your onion?

# The Master

By BABETTE DEUTSCH

I.

I give you more than you can own,  
You say, and I believe you.  
You take the rose the winds have blown  
At your still feet; where I have sown  
You reap. And does it grieve you?

V.

Be sure that passion is as wise  
As artists' tender fingers.  
For truth may prompt a thousand lies;  
And music is the pulse that dies  
And not the dream that lingers.

II.

The perfect flower should please you most,  
The smooth red fragrant beauty.  
A bud is just a pretty boast  
Of sweetness that, become a ghost,  
Outlives a lifetime's duty.

VI.

So why pretend you hate or fear  
What makes your blood beat faster?  
If you are quiet, you may hear  
A harmony that comes as near  
To shake you, as disaster.

III.

You ever were a connoisseur  
Of gardens and such graces.  
And I may like to make you stare  
With things as fine, if not so rare,  
As lotuses or laces.

VII.

There is no news in what you say  
To make me gasp or tremble.  
And certainly I know a way  
To hush you, if I go or stay;  
Although we both dissemble.

IV.

You praise musicianly technique,  
The discipline of daring.  
If one can touch his strings to speak  
With tears or triumph, is he "weak"?  
Masterly, or uncaring?

VIII.

For you, my dear, are not the first,  
To tell me what you've told me.  
Though you may bless, while others cursed,  
And guess that when you know the worst  
You may, a little, hold me.

IX.

Well, we have talked; you should rejoice  
That there has been no mincing.  
But will you, having had your choice  
Of lips more soft than any voice,  
Find silence more convincing?



# Ich Liebe Dich

BY ISRAEL SOLON

**H**ER name was Lily Barlow. She was small for her twenty years, and she looked as weak and thin and trembling as a naked young birch in a midwinter blast; but she carried a great mass of red hair on her little head, and she had large, round, open blue eyes that seduced your sympathy like a lost kitten. Her head, held somewhat to one side, her tiny mouth and chin, the droop of her thin shoulders, her small round arms, her body, arrested half way between childhood and womanhood, held always in unstable balance, forever tending in your direction, bending with your every movement, insinuating herself with her weakness as unashamed as a tired child—called to you to speak to her, to stroke and soothe her, to love her because of her need of you, because of her fluttering desire.

But that was not what she had been hired for. She was given her seven dollars a week for working ten hours a day in the kitchen of the Panama Lunch Room.

Lily Barlow was not exacting nor discriminating in her friendships, nor did she husband her affections; but you did not wish it otherwise, and did not play for it. Her charm, like herself, was too obviously shoddy to be strongly alluring or greatly alarming. Little, though, and few, as her favors were, they were as nearly the best she could give as they were nearly all she had to offer. And she gave them freely.

How deeply fond of her I had grown I shall not attempt to say. I did not

know then and I do not know now, and it does not matter. Knocking about among all sorts of jobs and all kinds of people, I had managed to pick up a lot of odd scraps in several languages—some of them adding little to my honor. The most innocent of these I took to teaching her. There were toasts in bad French, and some in worse Swedish; there was a Russian "jaw-breaker," a free translation of which would be, "A hump under a hump and under a hump a hump"; there was a Polish ditty about a gray horse, a decorated sleigh and a sweetheart; and there was an Italian posy, "*Bella come il sole e' bianca come la neve.*" But Lily found it hard to form the various sounds and was not able to remember them. She did manage to learn one thing, though, and learnt to say it well; and soon got to saying it often, thickly, like a child learning to talk, but properly enough accented, *Ich liebe dich, Ich liebe dich.*

What enabled her to learn this when she was not able to learn anything else, it is hard to say. She may have somehow found it easier to learn. But it may have been that she found she could make good use of it. Compelled to be constantly on her feet, for some hours on the jump, the work in the kitchen of the Panama Lunch Room was too hard for her. From the first she had tried to shift and escape it, tried all she had—hanging head, drooping heavy eyelashes, faint sighs, crooked little smiles, and random movements of her body; and, finding that she might add

a serviceable item to her little store of favors, she had learnt to say, "*Ich liebe dich, Ich liebe dich.*" This may have been but another of her attempts to shift and escape the hard work. This explanation, though plausible enough, was as uncertain as it was unsatisfying. For you always felt that it may not have been altogether because of her wanting to escape the hard work that she made you so free a tender of her charms. It may have been she was twenty, without friends, tact or pluck; and because she was never quite able to make out how much of real feeling for her there was back of our teasing of her.

Lily Barlow was the kitchen girl in the Panama Lunch Room, and the kitchen girl being the lowest of the menials, she had to make the sandwiches, help the cook, the porter, the dish washer, the counter men—she had to help wherever help was wanted, to run where she was shouted for, helping every one and being helped by no one, in accordance with the kitchen tradition.

But it was when the kitchen girl was a newly arrived Slav peasant girl, unable to utter above a dozen words of mangled English, who appeared to have been hacked out of a cedar stump and looked at you from behind a wooden face, dull, slow, and truculent, that the tradition had grown up. And so the tradition was broken, as it was bound to be broken, when Lily Barlow became the kitchen girl in the Panama Lunch Room; though when it was first broken I cannot recall, nor by whom, whether by me or some one else.

I remember helping her one forenoon. It was the last forenoon. Only a week or two after she had been put

to work it must have been, I believe; though it may well have been a month after, or even longer. It was on a cold, rainy morning in early fall. The luncheon rush had set in early and heavy, as it always did in bad weather, when the workers in the neighboring sweatshops and factories would not venture out or venture far. It was only a little after 10 o'clock when the errand boys, with long rows of tin buckets swinging in the notches of long poles, came trudging in for soup, stew and chowder, coffee, tea, milk and cocoa; with waste paper baskets suspended in front and behind them for scores of sandwiches of all kinds, and for cheese cake, poppy-seed rolls, cream puffs, doughnuts, chocolate eclairs, muffins, cuts of pies and cakes. By 11 o'clock the crowds that consumed their food on the premises, while sitting cramped and twisted in long rows of arm chairs running along the walls and down the center of the Panama Lunch Room, stood three and four deep in front of the service counter—pale, lean, unkempt, unbuttoned, disheveled men with faces greasy with sweating, with long, stringy necks rising from opened, crumpled shirts and long stringy arms and legs—moving, moving incessantly, twitching their shoulders, shifting their eyes, muttering to themselves, making nervous inquiries, repeating their orders every few seconds, wallowing under the slackened strain, lost and helpless away from their work.

As usual I was operating the bread cutting and the meat slicing machines. I opened the tins of herring, sardines and salmon, and emptied them into earthenware bowls, placing them all within easy reach of Lily. I carried the

crocks of soup, stew and chowder to the steam tables back of the service counter. And in what time I had left I helped the counter men dish out the orders.

By eleven-thirty the clamor grew maddening. The countermen kept shouting their orders faster and faster; before one stopped another had begun, and with each new order he would recount the total due him from the kitchen. "Four ham white, four—that's seven to come!" "Liver an', on two—how about the salmon rye coming?" And as Lily failed to send out the orders fast enough, the cries of the countermen became more bitter and insistent. I knew that some one would have to help her, else she would lose her job, and we should lose her; so I determined to help her.

Instead of staying back of the service counter and helping to dish out the orders, I popped into the kitchen at every opportunity I could find and what opportunities I could make. When I was able to remain a minute or more I made the salmon and sardine sandwiches for her, because they gave her the most trouble; and when I could stay but a moment, I did some trifle or other, if only to butter a slice or two of bread.

And Lily rewarded me with one and another of her small favors. She kept close to me, though that may have been because she felt flustered and unsteady; but there was also something more in her present behavior that neither of us tried quite to understand. All that while she kept whispering through a corner of her crooked little mouth, that she might not be overheard, "*Ich liebe dich, Ich liebe dich.*"

How long this went on I do not know. At this time of day it could not have been long before I was missed from behind the service counter. I must have known—I could not have helped knowing—that I would be caught, and so should have expected it; and yet, when the manager with his dripping sarcasm asked when I had been promoted to kitchen-girl's assistant, I rocked from foot to foot, on the verge of leaping at him, because of my utter frustration. Nevertheless, I did return to the service counter.

A few minutes later I saw Lily Barlow, dressed in her street things, hurrying past us, on her way to the cashier's desk, to receive her last pay. Lily Barlow had lost her job, and we had lost Lily Barlow.

She did not walk back to say good-bye to any of us; she did not turn around to wave us a hand or give us a parting look. She got out like a child rushing out of a dark vestibule at night, and she was gone from sight in a moment. A soiled overskirt, several frazzled ribbons, a pair of run-down dancing slippers—these, and a few doubtful memories, she had left behind her.

The person who took Lily's place was a hard, brutish, fighting female; she had been through many kitchens and countless battles, and she had acquired a vocabulary that would have been the envy of a Russian army officer of the old regime. She knew precisely where her own and everybody else's rights began, and just where they left off; and she stood ready to row all comers at the first sign of a threatened infringement. The squabbles in the kitchen were now foul and continuous. By the

end of another week the place became impossible, and I left it.

Throughout the year following I kept jumping from one job to another, each new job soon developed something or other to make me abandon it with little or no notice. Oddly enough, my jobs kept improving with each change. Spring found me selling outlying vacant building lots on small weekly payments. I did well at it, and soon showed many outward signs of my prosperity. But the hunger for change was in my blood, and I had to keep moving. By fall I had taken a position with a firm selling used cash registers.

I had been selling cash registers for some months when a "prospect" that every other salesman in the office had tried to "land" and failed was, in turn, assigned to me. It was a West Side saloonkeeper who owned an old Bensinger register, the manufacture of which had been abandoned years before. My turn had now come to try and get this saloonkeeper to exchange this machine for a later type, paying us the difference in cash.

It was a cold, raw morning, with a sharp wind and some dry snow. I dropped a couple of machines into the back of my rig and made ready to drive out there. As I was tucking the robes in about me, several of the men put their heads out the front door and wished me luck in an equivocal way, cackling and winking at me at the same time. They volunteered nothing more, and I drove off.

The saloon proved to be no different from many others I had been into. There was the forepart, with its imitation mahogany cigar stand and, behind it, the wall case containing bottled liquors;

then came the wooden partition with its frosted glass and mirror panels and the two swinging half-doors; beyond this was the barroom, proper or improper; then another imitation mahogany partition like the first; and, finally, the "Wine Room."

There was no one in the forepart and no one in the barroom; so that, presumably, the saloon did most of its business nights. A dumb-waiter back of the bar made it evident that they served drinks to the rooms above. This fact was of special interest to me, for it showed that they really might have used a later type of register, one having a checking system, to advantage. I pushed both the swinging half-doors in front of me and stepped into the wine room.

At one of the red tables in front of me, leaning over a greasy iron frying pan, stood a swarthy young man of medium height, weighing, I judged about a hundred and sixty pounds. He was smooth-shaven and sleek. The top of his round little head was surmounted by a crest of oily, coal-black hair, the neck and lower part of his head being shaven in a line with the tips of his "cauliflower" ears. Two stubby, powerful arms emerged from his rolled-up pink shirt sleeves. In his right hand he held a two-pronged steel fork and in his left a large steel knife, with which he was slicing a thick slab of greasy steak into oozing red cubes. A gentleman who, presumably, followed the prize ring for an avocation was having a late breakfast. He kept right on at his slicing without looking about to see who had entered.

Along three walls of this wine room were a number of semi-private com-



partments, shoulder-high stalls, and in the center of the room stood numerous red tables and bent-wood red chairs. In the far end of the right wall was the "Family Entrance," which also served as the entrance, or exit, to the rooms upstairs.

When he had sliced a dozen or more of the red cubes, he shifted the fork to his left hand and the knife to his right; and, spearing first one and then another of the oozing red cubes, he opened his mouth and inserted them both, together with about two inches of the length of the steel fork into his mouth, shut his teeth and withdrew the fork. His mouth filled with red meat, he reared up and faced me—a formidable gent, who appeared well able to defend his lady at a truck drivers ball. He stood there looking directly at me and grinding his meat between his jaws, red fluid oozing out of the corners of his mouth. After some seconds, he said: "What are you after?"

I continued staring at him. Though not a lovely creature, he was, in his own way, striking. My boorish behavior did not appear to disturb him in the least, and he continued seriously at the grinding of his meat.

I saw him throw up his head to listen. A sharp, slacking sound, as of some small woman coming down wooden steps in high-heeled bed-room slippers or unlaced shoes, could be heard on the other side of the right wall. He made a lunge for the rear door in a comical sort of way, seeming to oscillate from above his waistline while rolling forward rapidly; but it was an effective mode of locomotion, and he was there instantly. There he remained, his head down, his shoulders hunched, his stubby hairy arms hanging at his sides, watching to spring and grasp as soon as the door opened.

The door opened. His left arm curved downward and up, in a hook, "Hello, Skeezicks!" he called out.

For some seconds I caught flashes of pink feet in pink satin slippers and some stifled animal sounds. Then everything became still. A woman's voice said playfully.

"Go way, you bad boy! *Ich liebe dich*—no more!"

Before me, in a single pink silk undergarment, stood Lily Barlow, her tiny mouth covered with brown pan-grease.

Society is based upon the good opinion people have of themselves—and their suspicion of each other.—*Platitudes in the Making.*

# The Lost Comrade

By MARY COLES CARRINGTON

Last night, within the flying train  
That cleft your moonlight silence through,  
With face pressed to the cindered pane  
I saw your lonely heath, and you  
Bound, haply, for some rose-hung cot  
Fashioned of dreams, desired, apart,  
Where you might, by the world forgot,  
Commune with your world-weary heart.

Wrapped in the night's calm radiance,  
You scorned our din, our busy haste;  
Clearly I read, in one brief glance,  
Your old quick gesture of distaste,  
The sudden shrug, the hand outflung  
In vain entreaty to the moon  
To still the jarring rails that rung  
In some wild cadence, out of tune.

But I, with pulses keeping time  
To harsh, primeval, steel-wrung song  
Which, in hoarse tones of toil and grime,  
Wheel roared to wheel, defiant, strong  
Turned from your silence satisfied,  
Vibrant with hope, alert to meet  
Once more the strange, unquiet tide  
That floods within the city street.

Eager, I fled to seek mine own;  
Chill drew the mists where lone you stood—  
Ah, can your alien palm have known  
The steadfast clasp of brotherhood?

# Affairs of Catherine

## No. 1. THE GRAND DUCHESS RECEIVES \*

(A PLAY IN ONE ACT)

By LOUIS GILMORE

### CHARACTERS

THE GRAND DUKE PETER

THE VALET DE CHAMBRE

ELISABETH VORONZOF

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

COUNT STANISLAS PONIATOWSKI

THE GRAND DUCHESS CATHERINE

*An apartment in the suite of the Grand Duke Peter at Oranienbaum. Style, Louis Quatorze. To the right and left, double doors. In the center, at back, a door leading to the Grand Duchess' dressing room.*

*The period is the 6th of July, 1758.*

*At the rise of the curtain, the apartment is lit with wax candles and cloudy with tobacco smoke. Peter Ulric of Holstein, Grand Duke of Russia and heir to the throne, is seated at a small supper table placed in the center of the room. Although the table is set for two, the Grand Duke is having supper alone. He is smoking a long-stemmed pipe and has a glass of brandy at his elbow. The Grand Duke is thirty, but looks older. He is small, wizened and pock-marked. His Valet de Chambre is about to serve him.*

THE GRAND DUKE

*(Pushing him away)*

Can't eat another thing! Can't possibly do it! Only drink! Always drink—always drunk! *(Laughs uproariously.)* Did you hear that? Did you hear what I said?

THE VALET DE CHAMBRE

*(Very dignified)*

Yes, your Highness.

THE GRAND DUKE

*(Correcting him.)*

Imperial Highness!

THE VALET DE CHAMBRE

Yes, your Imperial Highness.

THE GRAND DUKE

What did I say?

THE VALET DE CHAMBRE

Your Imperial Highness was pleased to observe that your Imperial Highness is always drunk.

THE GRAND DUKE

That's right. Very good. How the devil do you ever keep a straight face?

THE VALET

No one but his Imperial Highness laughs at his Imperial Highness' jokes.

THE GRAND DUKE

When I'm Czar, everybody will laugh.

THE VALET

Yes, your Imperial Highness. Anything else?

THE GRAND DUKE

Some more brandy. *(Tossing it down.)* And I'll divorce my wife and marry Betsy Voronzof... *(With a glance toward the dressing room.)* Speak of the devil!...

*(Elizabeth Romanovna Voronzof comes in from the Grand Duchess' dressing room. She is nineteen and has already begun to grow fat. Her face and arms are pock-marked.)*

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Well, here I am at last!

THE GRAND DUKE

Hello Betsy! I just said speak of the devil!

\*Apply to the Author, care of The Double Dealer, for permission to act.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(*Entering into the spirit of the remark.*)

Did you? So I'm a devil, am I?

THE GRAND DUKE

No. Angel! Peter's darling angel—that's what Betsy is! What will my darling angel have, beer or brandy?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Brandy. (*Tasting it.*) Umm, good! (*Approaching the Grand Duke coquettishly.*) Now, give its darling angel a kiss. (*They kiss.*) And now, supper! (*Sits at her place at table and tastes the food on her plate.*) Umm, cold!

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Between puffs.*)

Couldn't wait any longer. Didn't know what had become of you!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(*Between chews.*)

It isn't my fault if I get a cold supper. As long as I'm Maid of Honor to the Grand Duchess, I have to be present when she gets into bed.

THE GRAND DUKE

My wife just gone to bed? Scandalous!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Oh, no, there wasn't anyone else in the bed!

THE GRAND DUKE

Well, it wouldn't have been the first time!

(*The clock on the mantle strikes eleven.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Counting the strokes.*)

Eleven o'clock!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Half an hour later than usual! What with being Maid of Honor to her and darling angel to you, I'm losing my appetite!

THE GRAND DUKE

(*With a guffaw.*)

No danger of that!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Well, then, my figure!

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Leaning toward her, gravely.*)

See here, Betsy! I'd sooner you lose your appetite than your honor.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

What?

THE GRAND DUKE

Your position! As long as you're Maid of Honor to my wife, it's all in the family and you and I'll be together.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

It's the only thing that makes me put up with her!

THE GRAND DUKE

What's the matter? Is she riding the high horse again?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Oh, no more than usual! (*Lowering her voice.*) Everybody says that her Imperial Highness and Count Poniatowski...

THE GRAND DUKE

What? The new Polish ambassador?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Yes. And that in Petersburg they were always together. Everybody knows about it.

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Naively.*)

Everybody but me. 'Pon my honor, I haven't heard a word about it. Nobody ever tells me a thing!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

I do. And as long as Madam Catherine is living in glass houses, she isn't very likely to throw stones at you and me.



(A knock on double door at right.)

ELISABETH VORONZOF

What's that?

THE GRAND DUKE

Must be the Captain of the Guard. His orders were to report to me at eleven for inspection of the guard and further orders.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Inspection of the guard? At this time of the night?

THE GRAND DUKE

It's the new uniforms. Just arrived from Holstein. Couldn't wait 'till tomorrow to see 'em.

(The Valet de Chambre opens the door for the Captain of the Guard, who steps into the room, salutes and stands at attention.)

THE GRAND DUKE

(Sternly.)

How's this, Captain? Orders were to report at eleven. It is now— (Walks, with an attempt at steadiness, to the mantle and looks at the clock.) It is now—one minute past eleven!

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

(Beginning a long speech.)

Your Imperial Highness...

THE GRAND DUKE

(Interrupting curtly.)

Discipline is discipline, Captain! See that it doesn't happen again!

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

But, your Imperial Highness...

THE GRAND DUKE

(Raising his voice.)

Not another word, Captain! I have just said: discipline is discipline! What would Frederick the Great say under the circumstances?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Probably the same thing, your Imperial Highness.

THE GRAND DUKE

I believe you are right. I will inspect the guard.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD,  
But the new uniforms...

THE GRAND DUKE

(Anxiously.)

Didn't they come?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Yes, your Imperial Highness. But the fit—it was found necessary to make alterations.

THE GRAND DUKE

Have the alterations been made?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.  
Not as yet...

THE GRAND DUKE

(Exploding.)

Gott im Himmel, make them at once!

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Has your Imperial Highness any further orders?

THE GRAND DUKE

Yes. (Scratching his head.) Er-r, that is, no. Unless her Excellency... What do you say, Betsy? Have I any further orders?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(Putting down her knife and fork.)

Yes. Twenty-five roubles reward to the sentry who arrests anyone found in the palace grounds without a permit.

THE GRAND DUKE

(To the Captain.)

You hear what her Excellency says?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Yes, your Imperial Highness.

THE GRAND DUKE

Govern yourself accordingly.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

I will, your Imperial Highness. I will make the arrest myself. Has your Imperial Highness any further orders?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

If you catch anyone, bring them here.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Very good, your Excellency.

THE GRAND DUKE

I will inspect the guard at ten in the morning.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Very good, your Imperial Highness.  
(*He salutes and goes out.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

What's the game, Betsy? Do you expect to catch anyone?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Yes. Count Poniatowski.

THE GRAND DUKE

But do you think he comes to see her here at Oranienbaum?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Why not?

THE GRAND DUKE

The guard's orders are to admit no one without a permit from my aunt the Empress Elisabeth, or from me.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Yes, I know. But with a couple of roubles anybody can get around a sentry.

THE GRAND DUKE

A Russian sentry; but not one of my faithful Holsteiners!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

They're all alike.

THE GRAND DUKE

But Betsy, —suppose they do catch Count Poniatowski and bring him here —what'll we do?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Pretend we think he's a spy. It will be amusing. (*Pushes her chair back from the table.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

Oh, all right. (*To the Valet de Chambre.*) Clear the table and bring another bottle of brandy.

(*The Valet de Chambre places the things on a tray and goes out.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

(*In the meantime, walks about the room. Picking up his violin from a table.*) What do you say, Betsy? Shall I play you a tune?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

No, Don't. Think of the noise.

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Replacing the violin on the table.*)

Then, what'll we do?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Don't let's do anything. I'm too sleepy.

THE GRAND DUKE

We'll go to bed, soon as we have another drink.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Too sleepy to go to bed.

THE GRAND DUKE

Then, what'll we do?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Nothing.

(*The Valet de Chambre returns with a bottle of brandy.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

Well, here's the brandy! (*To the valet, who is filling their glasses.*) That'll be all. You can go to bed now. If we need anything, I'll pull the bell-rope.

THE VALET

Good night, your Imperial Highness. Good night, your Excellency. (*He bows and goes out through the double doors at the left.*)

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(*Tasting the brandy.*)

Um-m, good!

*(Sounds of footsteps and angry voices in the corridor. The Captain of the Guard can be heard saying: I have orders to bring you to the Grand Duke. Another voice is heard saying: I must decline the honor, though my fortune may depend upon it. I have not a moment to lose.)*

THE GRAND DUKE

*(In the meantime.)*

That's the Captain of the Guard!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

He's caught someone! I wouldn't be surprised if it's Count Poniatowski!

THE GRAND DUKE

*(With his hand on the door-knob.)*

I'll open the door.

*(He flings the doors open and the Captain of the Guard comes in followed reluctantly by a tall woman dressed in a domino and wearing a hat and veil.)*

THE GRAND DUKE

*(Stepping back in astonishment.)*

Donnervetter, a woman!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

*(Angry and astonished.)*

A woman! What is the meaning of this, Captain? You should have arrested a man, not a woman!

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

How was I to know, your Excellency...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

How were you to know?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

Whether it was a man or a woman.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Do you take me for a fool?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

Pardon, your Excellency. But your Excellency's orders were to arrest anyone found without a permit.

THE GRAND DUKE

The Captain's right, Betsy! I remember exactly what you said.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Well, what was the woman doing?

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

Sitting on a bench at the foot of the stairway that leads to her Imperial Highness' bedroom.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Let's have a look at her.

*(The woman takes off her veil.)*

THE GRAND DUKE

A handsome wench! What'll we do with her? Turn her over to the Captain?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

The Captain had better search her. She may be carrying a concealed weapon.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

A wise precaution, your Excellency. *(In the midst of a vigorous search, he stops short, whistles and exclaims.)* I was right after all, your Excellency. This isn't a woman! It's a man! or the Chevalier d'Eon!

THE GRAND DUKE

*(With a ribald laugh.)*

The Chevalier d'Eon!

PONIATOWSKI

I may as well throw myself on your Imperial Highness' mercy and make a clean breast of everything... *(He removes the hat and domino. Underneath he is completely dressed as a man; very handsome, very elegant, and in the latest fashion.)*

THE GRAND DUKE

Well, what the devil are you?

PONIATOWSKI

A German tailor, come to measure a Holstein officer for a suit of clothes.

## THE GRAND DUKE

You've come to the right place, if you're really a tailor. But what do you mean by getting yourself up in a domino and veil for all the world like a woman?

## PONIATOWSKI

With your Imperial Highness' permission, I will explain. The hat, the veil and the domino are commissions of a lady—one of my very best customers. I was carrying her the articles in question while on my way to measure her for a riding habit.

## THE GRAND DUKE

Aha! A moment ago it was to measure a Holstein officer for a suit of clothes; and now it's a lady for a riding habit!

## PONIATOWSKI

The officer and lady are very close to each other, your Imperial Highness. I was going to measure them both at the same time.

## THE GRAND DUKE

Both at the same time! What do you say to that, Betsy?

## ELISABETH VORONZOF

The fellow is as funny as Narishkin.

## PONIATOWSKI

*(With an elaborate bow.)*

Your Imperial Highness is very kind.

## ELISABETH VORONZOF

*(Surprised.)*

Imperial Highness? I'm not her Imperial Highness! I'm the Countess Voronzof.

## PONIATOWSKI

A very natural mistake. *(With the gesture of a professional.)* Ah, if only I might measure your Excellency for a gown.

## THE GRAND DUKE

*(Waggishly.)*

What do you say, Betsy? He might measure us both at the same time!

## THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

The fellow hasn't yet explained, your Imperial Highness, what he was doing without a permit.

## ELISABETH VORONZOF

Nor, for that matter, why he was carrying the lady's things to her on his own back.

## PONIATOWSKI

Your Excellency, when I entered the palace grounds, they were not. They were under my arm—in a bandbox. As for my permit, I could have sworn that was in my pocket! No sooner had I entered the palace grounds, than I put down the bandbox and felt in the inner right-hand pocket of my coat for my permit. Imagine my consternation! It was gone! *(With a bow to the Grand Duke.)* Knowing the discipline that obtains among his Imperial Highness' Guard, I was about to turn back. Suddenly, it occurred to me, that with the things in the bandbox, I might be able to disguise myself as a lady of the palace—which would explain my not having a permit. In another moment, and scarcely realizing what I was doing, I had opened the bandbox and put on the domino, hat and veil—in short, the costume in which I appeared before your Imperial Highness and your Excellency a moment before.

## THE GRAND DUKE

If there's anything he hasn't explained, I can't think of it. What do you say, Betsy?

## ELISABETH VORONZOF

Ask him the lady and officer's names.

## THE GRAND DUKE

*(Peremptorily.)*

You hear what her Excellency says? Why don't you answer?



PONIATOWSKI

(*Not knowing what to say.*)

Sir, I am not at liberty...

THE GRAND DUKE

Not at liberty! I should say you are not! And what's more, you won't be, until you tell us their names!

PONIATOWSKI

But, your Imperial Highness, I have completely forgotten them. I have a very poor head for names.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(*Coaxingly.*)

You can't have forgotten the names of two such excellent customers! I'm dying of curiosity. You'll forget your own name in a minute...

PONIATOWSKI

(*With sudden inspiration.*)

Madam, I have already!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

What?

PONIATOWSKI

I have forgotten my own name! It is a disease to which I am subject. Fortunately, I remember the name of the disease—aphasia.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Aphasia? I never heard of such a disease!

PONIATOWSKI

It's a new disease, your Excellency.

THE GRAND DUKE

Is it catching?

PONIATOWSKI

Extremely so! As long as I am in the room, your Imperial Highness is in danger of catching it.

THE GRAND DUKE

What do you say, Betsy? Of course, we've both had the small pox. But all the same, we'd better not take any chances...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

I know of a cure for it.

THE GRAND DUKE

Do you really?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Yes. Give this fellow a hundred strokes of the knout. I promise you it will either cure the disease or kill the patient.

PONIATOWSKI

(*Alarmed.*)

The cure is worse than the disease, your Excellency.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Ah, I thought so. He is beginning to recover already. Tell us their names.

PONIATOWSKI

I really can't think of them.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Why are we waiting? Captain, let the fellow be given a hundred strokes of the knout.

THE GRAND DUKE

(*To the Captain of the Guard, who hesitates.*)

Do as her Excellency says.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

(*Drawing his sabre and motioning to Poniatowski to precede him.*)

Move!

PONIATOWSKI

(*Thoroughly alarmed, knowing that after all Russia is a barbarous country.*)

Your Imperial Highness does not dare?

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Drawing himself up.*)

I? Dare?

PONIATOWSKI

To subject the ambassador of his Majesty, the King of Poland, to such an indignity!

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Enjoying the situation.*)

Oho, so you're Count Poniatowski?

PONIATOWSKI

I am.

THE GRAND DUKE

(*With a complete change of tone.*)

What a fool you were not to take me into your confidence in time! It would have saved all this fuss. (*To the Captain of the Guard*) You needn't wait.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

(*Holding out his hand.*)

Your Imperial Highness, the twenty-five roubles reward...

THE GRAND DUKE

Oh yes, of course. (*To Poniatowski*) My friend, do you happen to have twenty-five roubles about you?

PONIATOWSKI

(*Feeling in his pockets.*)

I regret to say that I have only twelve roubles left. But everything that I have is at your Imperial Highness' disposal.

THE GRAND DUKE

The twelve roubles will be all for the present. (*Takes them and gives them to the Captain of the Guard.*) I'll give you the rest some other time.

(*The Captain of the Guard salutes and goes out.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Genially.*)

If you had only told me that you had come to see the Grand Duchess...

PONIATOWSKI

(*Surprised.*)

Sir, I don't understand...

THE GRAND DUKE

See here, Count, I wasn't born yesterday. In another minute you'll try to make me believe you came out to Oranienbaum to look at the scenery.

(*Laughs, and without giving him time to protest.*) If you want supper, pull the bell-rope.

PONIATOWSKI

Sir, I have already had supper. (*Bows formally and sits, as soon as the Grand Duke is seated.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

Well, when a man isn't hungry, he's thirsty. Help yourself to the brandy and pass the bottle to Betsy and me.

PONIATOWSKI

Thanks, your Imperial Highness. (*He fills three glasses and passes two of them. Then, lifting his own*) To your Imperial Highness' health! (*They all drink.*)

THE GRAND DUKE

(*Proposing a toast.*)

To the health of the Ambassador of his Majesty, the King of Poland. (*They all drink.*) And now, Count, I suppose you're worried about keeping the Grand Duchess waiting?

PONIATOWSKI

Sir, I protest...

THE GRAND DUKE

Never mind, Count. There's no harm done, as long as it's all in the family. Now that we are good friends, there's someone wanting. (*He gets up and walks out of the room into the Grand Duchess' dressing room.*)

PONIATOWSKI

(*Turning to Elisabeth Voronzof anxiously.*)

Has your Excellency any idea as to his Imperial Highness' intention?...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

He's gone to fetch her Imperial Highness.

PONIATOWSKI

(*Amazed.*)

Surely, the Grand Duke doesn't carry a joke that far...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

A joke? I don't see the point!

PONIATOWSKI

Waking the Grand Duchess when she's sound asleep!

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Sound asleep! What woman is ever sound asleep when she's expecting a lover?

PONIATOWSKI

Surely, you don't for an instant suppose...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

(Lucidly.)

Well, you see—it isn't as if you were the first one..

PONIATOWSKI

Do you mean to say?...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Before your Excellency, there was Count Saltikof. And before Saltikof—everybody says that Lieutenant Tchernicheff...

PONIATOWSKI

(With a shrug of the shoulders.)

Oh, what everybody says!...

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Well, as for Tchernicheff, I can't say for certain, as I wasn't Maid of Honor to her Imperial Highness at the time. (With a glance toward the dressing room.) Ah, here they are now!

(The Grand Duke comes in leading the Grand Duchess Catherine by the hand. She has on a dressing gown trimmed with lace and fur and her bare feet have been stuck into bedroom slippers. The future Catherine II is now in her twenty-ninth year. This is how, some years later, Poniatowsky describes his recollection of her. "With her black hair, she had a dazzling whiteness of

skin, a vivid color, large blue eyes, prominent and eloquent, black and long eyebrows, a Greek nose, a mouth that looked made for kissing, perfect hands and feet, a slight figure, tall rather than short, a carriage that was lively yet full of nobility, a pleasing voice, and a merry laugh." Some allowance may be made for the enthusiasm natural in a lover.)

THE GRAND DUKE

(With a gesture toward Poniatowski.)

Well, here he is! I hope you are all content with me.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

(Surprised.)

He! Do you mean Count Poniatowski?

THE GRAND DUKE

You needn't stand on ceremony with each other, my dear. Count Poniatowski and I are friends; and as long as you don't object to Betsy and me...

THE GRAND DUCHESS

(With a charming smile.)

I hope the Ambassador of his Majesty, the King of Poland, is content with my receiving him in my dressing gown. Petrushka, here, insisted on bringing me without giving me time to dress.

PONIATOWSKI

Permit me to say that her Imperial Highness has no need of dress.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

(Archly.)

What? You would have me naked?

PONIATOWSKI

No. Not naked, your Imperial Highness—but in beauty unadorned, adorned the most.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

(Extending her hand to him to be kissed.)

Courtier!

PONIATOWSKI

*(Kisses it.)*

Your Imperial Highness will set a new fashion.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

*(With mock gravity.)*

No. I could never make it the fashion here in Russia. The climate is too cold.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Count Poniatowski was afraid that your Imperial Highness would resent being waked out of a sound sleep.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

A sound sleep! I wasn't asleep. I had a headache, so I took Mahomet to bed with me.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

*(Startled.)*

Mahomet!

THE GRAND DUCHESS

A tragedy of Voltaire. What did you think? Did you think it was the Grand Turk?

ELISABETH VORONZOF

Your Imperial Highness is merry.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

Why not? *(With a glance at Poniatowski.)* I no longer have a headache.

THE GRAND DUKE

*(Doing the honors.)*

Let's all sit down and have supper. I'll pull the bell rope.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

*(Quickly.)*

No. Let's all go to bed.

ELISABETH VORONZOF

*(Nodding.)*

Too sleepy to go to bed...

THE GRAND DUKE

Well, I hope you are all content with me?

THE GRAND DUCHESS

*(Putting her hand on his shoulder.)*

Petrushka darling, we only want a letter from you to Betsy's uncle, Vice-Chancellor Voronzof, asking him to bring about a speedy return of our friend from Warsaw.

PONIATOWSKI

My position at St. Petersburg, your Imperial Highness, is a little thorny, owing to the strained relations between Russia and Poland.

THE GRAND DUKE

I will write the letter at once. *(To the Grand Duchess.)* My dear, you must tell me what to say.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

I will. As soon as you come back. You'll find ink, paper and quill on my writing table.

*(The Grand Duke goes into the dressing room.)*

THE GRAND DUCHESS

*(In a half-whisper.)*

Stanislas, you may give me a kiss.

PONIATOWSKI

*(Taking her in his arms.)*

What, my heroine, only one?

THE GRAND DUCHESS

*(With a glance at Betsy.)*

Sssh... No woman is a heroine to her Maid of Honor.

PONIATOWSKI

*(Smilingly.)*

Your Highness' Maid of Honor is half asleep.

THE GRAND DUCHESS

When she's entirely asleep—you may give me more than one.

*(They kiss.)*

CURTAIN



# Idolators

By WILBUR LAURENCE NEEDHAM

**“W**HAT spirited drawing! What handling of color and composition! Notice that velvety, wine-tinted mantle, enfolding her shoulder with a suggestion of the pure perfection underneath! The brown hair across the swell of her breast, in a shimmering wave which no sunlight needs to accentuate; the tilt of her profile, half toward the stars and half melting into the shadows of the canvas, like a caress. And the faint blush in her cheeks. Ah, Morton, originality alone is not art. Jacquet may not have been as original as some of our futurists; but I often think their sort of originality is only a pose to cover up a lack of real, vital talent. It is so much more difficult to faithfully interpret the natural than to distort it in haphazard, unbeautiful fashion.”

“I agree with you. Most futuristic work might well be accidental, for all we know—the very origin of it, indeed, may have been a slip of the brush or two; the artist, standing back, sees a blurred, awkward figure staring out to laugh at Art. As for the rest; sheer naked amateurishness! A child has done it better on his slate at school.”

Hammesfahr nodded at the younger man's words, his gray hair slipping over a thoughtful temple with the gesture. “And yet, here's Jean Gustave Jacquet unnoticed by the dogmatized student of art, and there's Paul Gauguin slavishly copied in all his childishness. If it weren't so pitiful, it would be laughable!”

“And this ‘Young Woman,’ with that sweet, patient expression fondling her lips and blue eyes; I wonder who posed for her?” Morton spoke his youth; and Hammesfahr smiled his age.

“I don't know, Morton; I am not a deep enough student. But this girl was very dear to him, I think, to put such fire and feeling into his brush.”

“Surely... It's too bad such artists and such women must die. It is terrible that they are made to offer their art and their beauty to the earth at last, never to be seen again in the flesh.”

“Of course. But so must all of us, giving place to others that the world may renew itself and go forward. And, my boy, you will find the world very much resigned to the order of things when comes the turn for you or for one you love.”

“I suppose so—but, Mr. Hammesfahr, there would never be such resignation in *me*, if I loved the ‘Young Woman’. She should always be the same to me, regardless of her age and no matter how faded the beauty I worshipped in her youth!”

Hammesfahr smiled indulgently. “I know. But to your children? Your descendants?”

“Would they not worship her as I did? As I do Jacquet's lovely painting?”

“I doubt it.”

“Why?”

“Nature, that's all. From dust to dust—many millions. And there shall be others... No; you can't stop the

moving hand, nor erase its cruelties. Only by immortality, and that is not given to many. The Empress Josephine was beautiful, and she is remembered. But I once knew a little girl who was even more beautiful—and purer, I know. She is forgotten by the world, save where the world knew her."

Hammesfahr's voice was very tender, now, and Morton saw his thoughts... Mary Alice. Long auburn-brunette curls; a pensively spiritual face; soft, deep eyes of pleading, unfathomable brown; a voice that crept into your heart and entangled it forever. Oh, he knew her. And so might Hammesfahr, if he would only forget that other and look. His Mary Alice was dead these many years, with a smile on her lips as in life, and a wreath of white hair falling about her face. But the Mary Alice whom Morton loved was living again her mother's life, if in another age... Hammesfahr was blind not to see. She had been wonderful, yes; but she'd grown old, and her time had come... And Mary Alice, she of the auburn-splashed hair and the beating pulse, and the quick, responsive smile:

she from the womb of that other? Morton told himself that he should never be able to philosophically accept—never—the passing of this little girl of a thousand charms. Why, then, should his children—and hers?

Each to his vision, living and dead; each to his blindness, Youth and Age. Thus Aucassin and Nicolette: thus Frank and Hazel... But Hammesfahr? He looked forward for Morton, and back for himself. That was all. For him there was no present. When, indeed, has there ever been a present for Age or a past and future for Youth?

The Nickerson Room of the Chicago Art Institute enveloped the dreamers again; and the Frenchman's exquisite little canvas hung shyly before them, face half averted, eyes tender, color radiating from every delicate stroke of Jacquet's genius-stained brush.

"Beauty!" whispered Morton; and "Beauty!" echoed Hammesfahr. And each had his dream; and each sighed over a passing—done and to come—of that dream; and neither of them knew that it was immortal.

## Measure

By BABETTE DEUTSCH

Evening has loosed her tides upon my breast.  
The metal moon, it will not let me rest.  
Yet are the ponderous stars a weight more light  
Than your still breathing near me in the night.

# The Passing of James Branch Cabell

By VINCENT STARRETT

**I** COME at once to bury Caesar and to praise him.

With a delightful and ironic gesture of farewell, Cabell has announced his own passing. . . "for oblivion has its merits, to which I now direct a brightening eye." Rather violently, he pushes through the swinging doors so that, with the appearance of accident, they rush back and take his latest and most distinguished detractors across the bridge of the nose. "Vale!" his voice sounds mockingly from the other side; and outside in the fierce light of contemporary journalism stand those who waved him determined farewell, looking, it must be admitted, a bit bewildered and foolish.

I had not read this delicious trifle when I contemplated my own *Hic jacet*, and a tardy perusal reveals that I have been anticipated in a number of observations; undismayed, I shall go forward with those fragments of my program that are left me.

It is perfectly obvious, of course, that Cabell does not for a moment believe in his own report of Cabell's passing. But the fact is, in an important sense Cabell is dead. Scorrowfully I say it; yet paradoxically am I reconciled and even happy. Whether his death may be attributed to natural causes or to the "assassinatory labors" of his critics need not concern us at this time. He is dead. In spite of the satirical gayety of his *ante-mortem* statement, I choose to accept the report as authentic for reasons which I shall set forth at length

and with what perspicacity is given me. If the case is not precisely as I state it, certainly it ought to be, for art and tradition demand it.

Like Arthur Machen, his one contemporary in the curious field in which his finest work has been done, Cabell had a task to perform; like Machen, he has performed it, and now retires. The rest may not be silence; but the great books are written. Already, Cabell "belongs to the ages."

Cabell's march toward the heights began with his first published short story, indeed with his first unpublished manuscript; it ended triumphantly upon his objective pinnacle with the ill-fated "Jurgen." "Figures of Earth" is admirable, but, in the light of "Jurgen," apochryphal, as will be regarded all future writings from Dumbarton Grange; it marks the first downward step on the other side of the mountain. Because it is the first, it is still well toward the summit, and will remain one of the first half dozen of Cabell's works. Properly, it immediately should have preceded "Jurgen," the book with which the master "peaked," to use the language of mortality statistics. I think there will not be too many to follow; Cabell is too much the complete artist to permit dilution of his reputation. To continue, he must in large measure re-write himself, and this, I fancy, he is unwilling to do.

The great books are "The Cream of the Jest," "Beyond Life," and "Jurgen." Not too far below stand "Figures of

Earth," "The Cords of Vanity," and "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck," a magnificent second line of defense. And the lesser writings are only lesser because they are not the equal of those named.

The question I set myself to answer before setting down these impertinent and oracular *dicta*, was (I suppose is): Would Cabell have gone farther had not "Jurgen" been suppressed? I decided that he would not. What further might he have done? In "Jurgen" he has given the world a book to stand with the literary bibles of the ages. At what conceivable peak might he have aimed his sandals, after "Jurgen"? That was the situation as I saw it, a situation perhaps born of my own violent affection for "Jurgen." There is a limit (I said) even to the genius of a Cabell. Somewhere genius must reach the end of its journey, granting that itself may not recognize that point when attained, and that its performance never can equal the splendor and perfection of its dream—the truth of the latter proposition being responsible for the former. "Jurgen," then, in my opinion, stands with the supreme works of literature; to surpass its performance Cabell would have to achieve something greater than the greatest; and such is my thought of "Pantagruel" and "Pickwick" and "Don Quixote" and "The Queen Pedauque," and a scant handful of others, that I refused to believe the phenomenon possible. This, of course, is reckless and dogmatic; but no matter.

Cabell, therefore, is dead, and while I am sorry, yet am I glad, for the great works are written; we shall always have them; nothing can take them from

us or from those who are to come after us. I am glad that they were written in my day, and by an American—not, heaven knows, for patriotic reasons; but because the miracle has happened in a country where literature of the sort is sadly needed, and where, perhaps of all nations, it seemed less likely that it immediately could happen. Cabell will write other books, and they will be good books "for one so dead"; he will re-write his earlier books, and may conceivably spoil some of them; but he will never injure his greater fame, for he is too fine an artist. It may be that some day he will approximate "Jurgen" (for in what other direction can he turn? He can not write of Winesburg, Ohio), and give us a posthumous child of the glorious and disreputable pawnbroker; and certainly I believe we shall have further fine tales of the "Gallantry" and "Domnei" persuasion; but at his height he will no more than re-write "Jurgen" with a new carbon in his typewriter.

And so I await the resurrection, hoping that I am wrong.

No other writer of modern times has been in turn so neglected, so bepraised and so bespattered. For twenty years, not all of them apprentice years, he was ignored; suddenly he was discovered and exalted; last week he was villified and condemned. Now, being dead, his apotheosis begins, or, at any rate, is resumed at the point where the kindly office was interrupted by the "bubble-prickers." He has been called many things. Mr. R. M. Lovett, not unkindly, would have him a "decadent realist"; but he is not decadent, and certainly he is not a realist in the ordinary meaning



of that abused word. Mr. Hewlett, most unkindly, would have him a pretentious charlatan, and a charlatan is the one thing he is not, even if we grant all the rest. Mr. Le Gallienne would have him insincere, and finds that "Jurgen," "The Cords of Vanity" and "The Soul of Melicent" (*Domnei*), "are as little animated by any least particle of himself as—any of his writings"; yet Mr. Lovett discovers that "throughout all he has remained himself." Mr. Le Gallienne, again, finds him lewd; but Mr. Rascoe vigorously asserts the contrary. Into at least one of Cabell's tales, Mr. Markham reads a pious moral; but to Mr. Mencken Cabell is a genial pessimist, an exhilarating skeptic, and quite the last fellow to point a moral. It is this last-named notion, surely, that is responsible in large measure for Mr. Mencken's enthusiastic acceptance of Cabell—one of the most astonishing episodes in contemporaneous criticism. But it is perfectly clear from the foregoing, and a great deal more that might be cited to the same effect, that any person may read into Cabell whatever he chooses to read, may look for anything he would like to find and be reasonably certain of finding it. This in itself is significant.

Two appreciators have come close to the truth: Mr. Hugh Walpole and Mr. Wilson Follett. Mr. Follett's opinion has been frequently quoted, but may be quoted again: "He (Cabell) is a realist of the realities which have nothing to say to fashion and change, and his momentary function among us is to reconstitute that higher realism which is the only true romance." And Mr. Walpole discovers that Cabell is "engaged in the

history of the human soul. . . His books are simply varying chapters of the "Wandering Jew" . . . behind the ephemeral body the features of the longing, searching, questing soul are the same."

Cabell has discovered, or re-discovered, the admirable doctrine (the economic theory of literature, he calls it) that fine literature must, in effect, be an allegory and not the careful history of particular persons. Thus, often, we glimpse his mysteries through a glass, darkly; his characters in romance have the semblance of shadows within a dream, beckoning and curiously beguiling and always vaguely familiar; his truths flash suddenly upon us, often in retrospect, like the tardy recollection of a half-remembered face in a crowd; and their sum is the sum of reality, sketched with dainty malice in mediaeval colors. The procession of life pours past as we stand at the curb, a grotesque masquerade, a sixteenth century pageant, pennons flying and trumpets singing, quarreling men and weeping women, whispering lovers and boisterous blades, politic friars and haggard kings; but the faces of the company are our own, smirking, wailing, loving, longing. . .

But the denounced gospel of James Branch Cabell most clearly is set forth in his own testaments. "Beyond Life" is studded with revealing texts. . . "Man alone of animals plays the ape to his dreams"; "it is by the grace of romance that man has been exalted above the other animals"; "in youth all men that live have been converts, if but in transitory allegiance, to that religion of the world's youth, to the creed of *domnei*, or woman-worship"; "Art must deal with contemporary life by means of

symbols"; and, finally... "To what does the whole business tend?—why, how in heaven's name should I know? We can but be content to note that all goes forward, toward something... It may be that we are nocturnal creatures perturbed by rumors of a dawn which comes inevitably, as prologues to a day wherein we and our children have no part whatever. It may be that when our arboreal propositus descended from his palm tree and began to walk upright about the earth, his progeny were forthwith committed to a journey in which today is only a way-station. Yet I prefer to take it that we are components of an unfinished world, and that we are but as seething atoms which ferment toward its making, if merely because man as he now exists can hardly be the finished product of any Creator whom one could very heartily revere. We are being made into something quite unpredictable, I imagine; and through the purging and the smelting, we are sustained by an instinctive knowledge that we are being made into something better. For this we know, quite incommunicably, and yet as surely as we know that we will to have it thus. And it is this will that stirs in us to have the creatures of earth and the affairs of earth, not as they are, but "as they ought to be," which we call romance. But when we note how visibly it sways all life we perceive that we are talking about God."

In "The Cream of the Jest," we find this: "It is only by preserving faith in human dreams that we may, after all, perhaps some day make them come true." And there is Horvendile's declaration at Storisende (*ibid*) that we

dreamers hunger for we know not what, and for the exercise of powers we know that we possess, without knowing what they are. These are all clues to the Cabell *mystery*, and there are some hundreds of others in the thirteen volumes which Cabell's eternal figure, not too carefully disguised, pursues his way adown the centuries. Oh, there are plenty of clues; and you and I, who are the readers, with Cabell the writer, and his central figure, who is all of us put together, must run them down or ever the mystery is solved. Do you remember the mad detective chase in Chesterton's gigantic conception, "The Man Who Was Thursday"? In a sense, Cabell's tales are all detective stories of that sort, and if the quarry be not God, under whatever name, I have misread the allegory, for so, indeed, in a passage I already have quoted, it is explicitly stated... The eternal Quest!

Or will you say that "Beauty" is the word? Cabell, of course, will not quarrel with you if you do. He offers you a clue in those curious hieroglyphics which are the frontispiece to "The Cream of the Jest," and which, turned upside down, present the following clarifying legend:

"James Branch Cabell made this book so that he who will may read the story of man's eternally unsatisfied hunger in search of beauty. Ettarre stays inaccessible always and her loveliness is his to look on only in his dreams. All men she must evade at the last and many are the ways of her elusion."

But "beauty" is a comprehensive word... and the solution is still far to seek, even after we have glimpsed it. *Jurgen* looked upon strange scenes; his

opportunities were many; but he returned at length to his home and his wife, still wondering, still doubtful, and vaguely satisfied with things as they were. Kennaston in "The Cream of the Jest," also played at detective; and, near the end, the author says: "The Wardens of Earth sometimes unbar strange windows, I suspect—windows which face on other worlds than ours; and they permit this or that man to peer out fleetingly, perhaps, just for the joke's sake; since always they humorously contrive matters so this man shall never be able to convince his fellows of what he has seen, or of the fact that he has been granted any peep at all." The parable, it is apparent, is constructed on the Hans Christian Andersen formula; if you insist upon a moral, you must sense it; it is not set down in explicit black and white; and when you have discovered it, perhaps it is not the right moral; but still...

This is the essence of Cabell's skepticism.

Romantic ironist? Perverse allegorist? Skeptic, mountebank, dreamer? What would you! Is it not enough to understand without understanding? Certainly Cabell is a supreme ironist, and he is also a tender poet. Disillusioned, yes; Cabell is disillusioned; but he is the victim of a greater illusion than any he has lost. Will you call him an anachronism, or the prophet of a new renaissance? Perhaps that does not matter either; probably he is neither the one nor the other, but one of those lonely, occasional figures who, in one guise or another, by sorcery or by satire, offer the world a new meaning of Ecstasy, a new clew to Mystery, and then pass on. Of these, each has his converts and dis-

ciples, and... "we must be content to note that all goes forward, toward something..."

But it must be clear that this denounced gospel of Cabell's is not so perverse and monstrous a thing as those who have failed to read him would have you believe. There is, of course, "Jurgen," that disreputable pawnbroker; he was suppressed in covers; but you are *Jurgen*, and you would fiercely resent, and very properly so, the suppression of yourself. You are immoral, and therefore *Jurgen* is immoral; but if you are not, *Jurgen* is not... Cabell discovers his symbols in curious places, and his interpretations may startle, but they are part of revelation. If naturalism is art in "L'Assomoir" and in "Maggie," it is trebly so in its glorified and interpreted manifestations in "Jurgen." There is, of course, no answer to the determined and illiterate attitude that cries "depravity" in the teeth of *Jurgen's* robustious and healthy adventure; no answer other, at least, than that of Baudelaire to the shocked bleatings of those who were dismayed by accounts (largely false) of Poe's personal "depravity"—"What then?" asked the Frenchman, with a shrug. In such fashion, I reply to those who recount, not without gusto, the several infamies of *Jurgen*.

The chiefest difficulty of the critic would seem to be in distinguishing between the utterances of the author and the utterances of one of the author's puppets. But the "hero" of the piece may be no less the author himself than the "villain," granting that both are Cabell, or whom you will. Mr. Le Gallienne errs here; to show that Cabell is something of a cad, he quotes the epi-



sode of Elena Barry-Smith in "The Cords of Vanity," at the conclusion of which the composite hero-villain, Townsend, having languidly insulted the lady of his immediate *affaire*, is ordered from the premises...

"Get out of my house!" Elena said, quite splendid in her fury, "or I will have you horsewhipped. I was fond of you. You would not let me be in peace. And I didn't know you until tonight for the sneering, stuck-up dirty beast you are at heart—" She came nearer, and her glittering eyes narrowed. "And you have no hold on me, no letters to blackmail me with, and nobody anywhere would take your word for anything against mine. You would only be whipped by some real man, and probably shot. So do you remember to keep a watch upon that lying, sneering mouth of yours! And do you get out of my house!"

But Cabell wrote the lines I have just quoted quite as much as what had gone before. Is he any less Elena Barry-Smith than Robert Townsend? Is he not, as a matter of fact, simply the omniscient and thoroughly capable author whose genius has given him understanding of the minds and souls of all his book people, the "good" and the "bad" alike? Indeed, is it not the very proof of this genius that the caddishness of the temperamental Townsend is able to infuriate Mr. Le Gallienne? No, "The Cords of Vanity" is an important chapter in Cabell's "history of the human soul," which is not to say that Townsend is not frequently a cad, for he is philanderer, libertine and cad, and, by the same token, not an unfamiliar figure in life. As a study of what is popularly called "the artistic temperament,"

the book is infinitely more revealing than "Dorian Gray," because it is far less an imaginary biography than Wilde's opus. In "The Cords of Vanity," too, I find a fine flavor of the picaresque romances of earlier days; there is, artistically, a joyous rascality, a large unscrupulousness, about Townsend that is almost epic; for all his weaknesses, or because of them, he is a most likeable scoundrel. One may enjoy reading about him without wishing him for an intimate. The several Cervantesque qualities I find in this book also are found in "The Rivet in Grandfather's Neck," with other signs of the Spaniard's thought and manner.

If in the two books I have just mentioned, and in "The Eagle's Shadow," Cabell's three "modern novels," the author seems somewhat less at ease than in his "mediaeval stories," to divide the bibliography into its superficial groups, it is because he is largely unconcerned with matters of immediate and topical interest, save as they relate to those "realities which have nothing to say to fashion and change." Indeed, Cabell's Economic theory, as set forth in "Beyond Life," in part asserts that first-class art does not reproduce its contemporary background, and the dictum—while I, for one, do not subscribe to it without reservation—may be accepted as the author's own criticism of his "modern novels." Cabell prefers the glamor of old days, the colored perspective, and an atmosphere unbreathed of human lungs, to paraphrase a line of his own; the mythologies of all lands and times fascinate and delight him, and when they are insufficient to his purpose he invents his own mythology. All to considerable purpose.



In every writing he seems at once seeker and interpreter; himself groping toward glamor... perfection... himself revealing his discoveries as they are made. Scornful and satirist of theology, yet not quite the complete skeptic; a whimsical pessimist, a fantastic doubter, and completely the victim of a dream that no disillusion can overcome... A watcher of the skies. Although not quite his greatest book, "The Cream of the Jest" is the perfect revelation of James Branch Cabell; of yourself and myself, and of all of us who do not contract from our associates our opinions and beliefs as if they were the measles.

I have said that one reads what one will into Cabell, and it may be that I am doing just that; but if so, I find what I seek because it is there.

A detailed review of his books is beside the point; that is not the purpose of this paper, which, it is to be remembered, is in the nature of a memorial. "Our sole concern with the long-dead is aesthetic," he himself has written, and if Cabell's death is of recent occurrence, no matter; I shall anticipate posterity: aesthetic consideration of his books requires only an emotional understanding of their sum... "Off-hand," began John Charteris, "I would say that books are best insured against oblivion through practice of the auctorial virtues of distinction and clarity, of beauty and symmetry, of tenderness and truth and urbanity..." If this be true (*vide Beyond Life*), are not the books of James Branch Cabell insured against oblivion?

Mr. Mencken's recent fulminations against the south, I believe, were uncalled for and undeserved, although his

praise of Cabell is fulsome and deserved. Would he have "the Sahara of the Bozart" as prolific a breeding-ground of mediocrity as the north? "The south begins to mutter," he says, with jovial, oracular patronage, although his own ominous murmur for some years has been heard across the land... But if the desert bloom only once in a century and bring forth a Poe or a Cabell—or, indeed, a Mencken—it should be cause for rejoicing. Let us be thankful for the jungle and sand and the hot, bare middle years, while with eagerness we await the next phenomenon. Poe and Cabell are almost the two most distinguished figures in American literature. Is it significant that both are—were—southerners? And is not no literature preferable to the oceans of toilet water literature manufactured in the north?

In the case of Cabell, claquery has been cried by the "bubble-prickers"; but that is patently absurd when it is recalled that for twenty years he was unappreciated and obscure. After a score of years, a comparatively few intelligent readers and critics forced Cabell's contemporaneous fame, over the tumultuous log-rolling of hacks and fools for lesser men. Now the reaction, dating from the "Jurgen" episode, and the air is filled with tiny gloatings. Little critics, obscenely writhing, wrathfully contemplate the astounding phenomenon of genius... amoebas fearfully concerned with the mechanism of an airplane...

The situation is not without precedent in history. The eclipse is partial and temporary. "Our moral prejudices fail to traverse the corridors of time."

# Old Satan

By ALICE CORBIN

Old Mooney-eyed Satan  
    Away from me!  
O drive old Satan  
    Away from me!  
Old Mooney-eyed Satan  
    Away from me!  
O drive old Satan  
    AWAY!

Somebody's going to die today,  
And the Devil will stand beside the bed,  
And a tall white Angel on the other side  
Dispute with him for the dead.

'Twas so when your Aunt Mary died—  
She saw old Satan stand  
With crimson garment and hornéd head,  
And she cried to the Lord to take her hand!

She turned her back on the Devil there,  
She said, "O Lord, I have served thee well!"  
And the Devil scrooged and turned away,  
And ran straight back to Hell!

Somebody's going to die today—  
It may be you, and it may be me,  
But nobody knows who it will be,  
So pray to the Lord to keep you free!

Old Mooney-eyed Satan  
    Away from me!  
O drive old Satan  
    Away from me!  
Old Mooney-eyed Satan  
    Away from me!  
O drive old Satan  
    AWAY!

# The Ivory Tower

By EDITH CHAPMAN

"S O that's your philosophy?"

The question was rather a statement and the voicing of it hardly broke the silence. It fused into the prevailing atmosphere of half-tones which were the note of this room,—of the neutral tinted walls and hangings, the infrequent projectures of old furniture, as much as of the man who presided over it, and who was sitting now, opening and closing with such unconscious precision his brown, slender hand. This same nervous hand had doubtless reached out and stripped away, piece by piece, every excess of ornament, leaving only the mellow tonelessness out of which the faded prints, a portrait, a rich old rug or two seemed not so much to emerge as to ripen with contour the dimness of the shadows. The place had about it something of the perspective that one finds in the retreating backgrounds of certain Japanese prints. What were the books, one wondered, lined up in the open cases? What was that vase like, which lifted a chill curve or two out of the darkness?

Hargrave thus extravagantly speculated as he felt the spirit of the room not for the first time affecting him. Or was it the spirit of the man who had created it? They seemed hardly separable. In these confining limits the latter spent the greater part of his time, and here were accomplished those miracles of prose which testified to his violently active mental life. This was the only activity, apparently, of which

he was capable. He existed only as an artist. How could he know so much, Hargrave had often asked himself, know it with such acuteness of discernment, and still live so little? It was not that Dalton was didactic even in his asceticism. He accepted the invitations of his friends; he invaded their houses, but he passed in and out always an onlooker; observing, never mingling. About him there seemed to remain nothing of the personal. He had poured it all into his creative capacities.

Looking at him attentively—the slight languid figure, and the pale face in which the eyes presided as mind over matter—Hargrave repeated his question. "So that's your philosophy?"

"That there is no reality? Yes, I suppose so." The other shifted, not nervously, but as if to adjust his body more firmly to the process of thinking. "Isn't *reality* merely an arbitrary term? Does there exist for any of us more than our personal consciousness? Isn't our entire experience, I mean, simply the break and mend of its surface?"

Hargrave seemed to have no answer ready.

The writer leaned back in his chair, whimsically irritable, almost querulous. "Why should we seek to imprison everything in nets of our physical sense. The child reacts that way, who tests out something by putting it in his mouth." He pressed his next point with some heat. "If I lean forward and seize a thing, do I arrive any nearer to a perception of it? Quite the reverse. I im-

poverish it, even for my senses. I deprive it of its relational values." He pointed to a black Chinese vase holding a single, ivory-colored rose. "For example that. What do you make of it from where you sit? I get a series of impressions. The contrast of color, black with white, and the consequent multiplying of the tonal values of each. That uninterrupted curve which one can trace from the rim of the farthest petal along the stem to the slender base of the glass. Those charming ochre tints which the lamplight gives to the petals most in shadow, the luminous transparency of the others. . . . If you take the thing, you assure yourself that the vase is porcelain, the flower some veinous, pulpy substance from which has been lost the fancied texture, the fancied throb of color. You have turned it into something utterly sordid; and all because you were ruthless to break past the barriers of perspective."

Hargrave soberly listened. "And would you apply everywhere your principle of—abeyance?"

"Oh—everywhere?"

There was another long pause before Hargrave, with some constraint, pushed his next question. "What about love? Another *ignis fatuus*?"

"Most of all I imagine. Because of the intolerable disfigurement. That, I mean, of hacking an ideal down to practical terms."

Whereupon the other struck out an impatient hand. "Have you ever been in love?"

"Yes." Dalton pushed the table away. He seemed to require more space; his bodily tension quickened; his languor left him, and in the deepened pallor of his face his eyes suddenly flared. "Would you care to hear?"

Hargrave nodded. He was more eager than he would have acknowledged to know something of this man whom—for all their long intimacy—he had never seen without that winsome but impenetrable reserve which rendered him inscrutable.

Dalton began his narrative. "About ten years ago I was spending a winter in Petrograd. One of the houses where I spent a good deal of time was that of Madame Kousnitsova. I was one of her great admirers. She is perhaps the only really distinguished woman I have ever known. She was at that time almost seventy. I suppose she is dead by now. . . . During the entire period of my stay in Petrograd I never missed her evenings when I could avoid it. . . . One night I came in rather late, and found a large party, with music going on. One heard a good deal of music at this house, particularly of the contemporary school. My friend was very fond of it. On this night it was Scriabine's *Prometheus*. I settled down quietly next to a thin, sallow man whom I had never seen before but whom I learned afterward was the father of the illustrious composer R. I hadn't been there long when I became conscious of something outside of the music which was giving me pleasure. At first this delicious sensation was very vague. But finally I perceived that what I had probably been staring at for several moments was—a woman's hand. . . . The owner was sitting about a third down the length of the room from me, her head averted, her slight figure blurred by the slack, dark gown she wore, and further concealed by the projectures of the chair in which she sat.



I had, however, an unobstructed view of her right hand which lay, with the fascinating violence of white on black, along her slender, velvet-gowned knee. I had never seen such a hand! It was morbidly slender hardly broadening from the wrist, and the fingers were long and, limp like the straight but petalled fingers of a Botticelli. They were without jewels. There was nothing from the stem of the wrist where it parted with the sleeve, to the farthest fingertip to interrupt that sculptural perfection which raised it somehow out of the realm of the living and gave it a quality of an *objet-d'art*. For a long time I simply stared at it. I seemed to have no curiosity about the girl herself. She was young, scarcely more than a child. I could see that much from where I sat. She was sitting utterly motionless and yet in what seemed an actual tremor of attention. Her hand conveyed the same impression. The long, still fingers listened. Through the ebb and flow of the music I continued to watch them, and at last I felt actual tears rising in my eyes. . . .

"When the music stopped and people began to form into groups all about me, I lost sight of the girl. Almost everybody had started for the dining-room. I was borne along in the general current.

"My hostess beckoned me, holding up my favorite liqueur, and I stayed beside her as long as I could, but the pressing crowd finally compelled me to move on. I was so preoccupied with the thought of that girl that I felt disinclined to talk to the people around me. Instead I started off through the conservatory with the object of finding her. I came out in a small library, un-

lighted except for two sconces of candles and a fire in the fireplace. Here, sure enough, she was. On hearing my steps she raised her head, and to my vast astonishment our recognition was mutual. She bowed; her lips parted in a smile. 'I know you,' she said softly in French. 'My aunt has spoken about you so often. I am Zina Kousnitsova. Won't you sit down?'

"I drew up a chair beside her. Her manner toward me was utterly natural and free from constraint. She told me a few facts of her life; how she had passed her childhood in the country on her father's estate; how she was now in a convent school in Kiev. This visit to her aunt was her first visit to Petrograd. The rush of novel sights and experiences seemed to have roused in her, so far, only a slight curiosity. She was inclined to be reticent of experience. It was evident how much she preferred her own world of ideas to that of sensations, since so soon, on her first evening she had escaped from the latter to this unoccupied library.

"Having thus disposed of herself, she reverted to the subject which interested her most—books. She spoke of her favorites with a subtlety of appreciation which utterly amazed me. How was it that so young she had come by her fastidious, critical sense. Hers was an intelligence that already gleaned and sifted. She had a very real flair for style. I listened, more and more carried away.

"Gradually—with infinite tact—she referred to my books. She had read them all. And for almost the first time I experienced that elation which comes to an artist when a young, fresh mind has perceived, beneath the surface of

his art, something of its organic intention. For a while I listened fatuously. Then, gently, my interest became again my returning sense of her. I became again conscious of her hand. Close as I was to it, I could see features of it which, at the other distance had escaped me. The pallor, the symmetry, the fragility of it made it so poignant that again I felt that singular impulse to tears. There was about her something unreal, glamorous, slightly morbid. She had the formal quality of early Italian paintings, the nebulous faintness of the fancies of Poe. I closed my eyes for a moment, and as I did so I seemed to feel her slight spiritual body in my arms. It was a moment of utter rapture.

"When I opened them we were no longer alone. A child had come into the room, the five-year-old granddaughter of my hostess. She had settled herself on the arm of my friend's chair, and cuddling up to her in childish fashion was fingering her hand. I felt a sudden absolutely illogical rush of resentment. The sight of even a child with impunity touching that hand roused me to fury. It seemed to me, by right of discovery, sacredly mine. Brusquely, with no apology, I rose and left them. I heard behind me a little stifled moan, and caught the flutter of detaining fingers.

"Out in the conservatory my emotion subsided. I felt a good deal of a fool. I wanted to go back to the girl and beg her pardon. I wanted even more to rush up to the aunt and beg her to let me marry her niece. In Russia girls were married young; as soon as they left the convent or sooner. I was as excited as a boy. . . My attention was

suddenly attracted by a white orchid flowering in one of the boxes at my right. I started at it as if it were, in very fact, what it so vividly reminded me of—that girl's hand. It had the same quality of whiteness, the same blue-veined fragility. I went over to it and broke it from the stem, but I had no sooner raised it than, one by one, the petals began to fall. They scattered over the floor. In the lustreless pallor of some of them I could see a thread-like vein or two of amethyst.

"When I went up to my hostess to say goodnight, her niece was standing beside her. The girl raised her eyes and across them lay a new shadow, the sophisticated shadow of pain. I can still hear the subtle cadence of her voice as she spoke the next words. 'You went away so suddenly? I hope I said nothing to offend you?'

"'You said nothing but what gave me profound pleasure.' My own voice, I am sure, was equally grave.

"'Ah, then, we shall be able to talk again. I have so much to ask you. You'll come back, won't you, before I go?' She offered me her hand in saying this.

Weakly I took it, overwhelmed at first to feel it in mine. I felt an impulse to stroke it as the child had done, to draw out the long, transparent fingers. I bent above it in the permitted foreign fashion and brushed it with my lips. As I did so I seemed to utterly absorb and possess myself of her flesh and spirit. She became mine, a part of me, never to be wrested from me while I live. I put it by as one puts by an emptied cup. That was all." Dalton fell to musing. His thin fingers which, during the recital, had lain tran-

quilt, began again automatically to open and close.

After an interval Hargrave prompted him. "But surely you went back?"

"No, I never went back. I left Petrograd the next day."

"But you loved her!"

"Therefore, I kept her. . . Ah, you

see." In his face the flame had gone out. A weariness had taken its place.

Hargrave looked about him. The shadows in the room seemed to have deepened, and the white rose to have waned a little. He rose and with a covert, baffled glance at his friend, slipped away.

## White Sails Against the Morning

By GLENN WARD DRESBACH

*White sails against the morning  
And many pearls of spray  
Tossed up on lonely beaches  
I have known in my day.*

*Gray smoke against the morning  
And dark winds weary grown  
With smoke and misty burdens  
In my day I have known.*

*And still I keep the white sails  
And gray smoke in the sky—  
For here against the morning  
Something of both am I!*

*Love, call to me! I'll answer  
Like a clean sail on the sea!  
But one may call and gray smoke  
Will drift in wearily.*

# The Physiology of Smells

By LAFCADIO HEARN

**A** CERTAIN Dr. Jager, of Stuttgart, appears to hold that the soul is situated in the nose, or more precisely speaking, that the seat of the soul is in the nose. This kind of doctrine brings us back to the earliest age of theological discussion when some placed the soul in the navel, some in the stomach, others in the heart; with the difference, however, that Dr. Jager really brings forward some indisputable facts in support of his eccentric notion. He claims with considerable force, that it is possible to tell upon entering a vacant room, in which a party has just been held, whether the said party was a merry or a dismal one by the sense of smell. In short, if the people composing it enjoyed themselves the room will smell agreeably; otherwise it will have an unpleasant odor. When we are miserable, he declares, we smell bad; when we are happy, we become like the denizens of the Musselman paradise, perspiring sweet perfumes. Nay, he goes even so far as to declare that as a dog by his olfactory organs estimates the character of strangers, so we also may cultivate our noses to the extent of being able to judge correctly human character by the emanations from the human body. Like skunks, we become disagreeably odorous when irritated; like flowers, we smell best when best nourished with the necessities of existence. Misery stinks; happiness hath an ambrosial emanation, such as might be shaken from the golden curls of the Im-

mortals; and the odor of sanctity is not a mere figure of speech, but a pungent reality. According to our humors we do smell; and each humor hath a special odor. So far we may agree with the scientist; but he goes on to observe that these odors are caused by emanations of the soul!

The fact is that we smell well or ill according to our physical condition; that sickness is apt to produce nasty exhalations and health a fresh odor by no means unpleasant—what has been called by French writers “the perfume of youth.” Little animals, young doves, puppies—all little creatures just newly entering upon life have a pleasant odor. There is a fresh, pleasant smell about cleanly young children; and the hair of a girl has a natural perfume, sweeter than all the cosmetic odors Fashion drowns it with—what some Latin writers have dared to call “the perfume of Woman.” Health and youth have certainly a natural perfume; and the breath of a perfectly healthy and happy person is as sweet as the odor of new-mown hay, or, as Macaulay says, “the breath of kine.” Health is happiness; a perfectly healthy person is generally merry. Sickness is misery; and miserable people are generally ill. Perhaps it is therefore true that a person with an exceedingly keen nose may be able to discover the mental condition of persons by the odor they are said by Dr. Jager to leave behind them.



# On Some Violinists

By ARTHUR SYMONS

IT was Pablo de Sarasate who first revealed to me, in 1892, that the passion in a Spaniard's blood could turn into fire and flame, as he drew his bow across the strings. But those fingers! Never were such fingers since Paganini's! Only, the other night, as I watched Kreisler's fingering, it seemed to me that they were at once abnormally sensitive and in their unerring agility almost superhuman. In the matter of execution there was apparently nothing that Sarasate could not do; he had sheer and absolute mastery; and the fantastic Spanish dances, with their broken rhythm, their pizzicato effects, their bizarre alternations of tone, are the real natural dances such as I heard in Spain. His compositions had a feverish, troubled brilliance, a passionate intensity. No violin sang with so strange an acuteness, became so heavenly a voice, such a lyrical cry—the cry of the modern soul. At times the strain would emerge, become almost an agony as the magical bow seemed to play a ghastly measure on strings made out of one's very nerves. So, like the most typical modern art—that, for instance, of Wagner, Berlioz, Sarah Bernhardt—Sarasate's playing was the art of *la névrose*. "In poetry," I wrote, "we have the art of Verlaine, in painting the art of Whistler, in sculpture the art of Rodin—all of them full of sensation sharpened to the point of morbid acuteness. It is just the same appeal that Sarasate makes to us, and

Sarasate alone among musicians. In Victor, Hugo's phrase concerning Baudelaire, he has *créé un nouveau frisson*. And to appeal with novel, with poignant appeal to our sensations is the aim of the most characteristically modern art."

I went to several of his rehearsals with the orchestra in Queen's Hall; there was in the stalls beside myself, always Ysaye with his black hair and a black cat that wandered about in a most feline fashion. Having read my article, Sarasate sent me this letter from the Hotel Dieudonné:

"15.6.92.

Je serai très heureux, cher Monsieur, de vous serrer la main Vendredi matin, et de vous remercier de la remarquable étude que vous avez écrite dans l'Illustrated London News sur ma pauvre petite personne. Quand je l'ai lu, cela m'a enthousiasmé, tellement j'ai trouvé que cela était artistique et même philosophique and méphistofolique. En Espagne on a traduit l'article partout et cela m'a fait le plus grand honneur; c'est vous dire que je suis votre très reconnaissant serviteur, et grand admirateur de votre esprit observateur. Cela fait bien de peur mais je ne sais pas en écrivain, surtout en français. J'aime mieux l'archet que la plume—mais dans tous les cas je ne suis pas un ingrat et vous remercie de tout mon cœur.

Votre

P. DE SARASATE.

Whistler and Sarasate were very intimate friends; both lived in Paris in the rue du Bac; in fact I rarely met Whistler without Sarasate's name being mentioned. Sarasate's tone was a miracle, like Melba's, and he added to this

miracle of technique a southern fire, which used to go electrically through his audience. He has his temperament and his technique, nothing else. The man who holds the violin in his hands is a child, pleased to please; not a student or a diviner. And Whistler has rendered all this, superbly. Note how Sarasate dandles the violin. It is a child, a jewel. He is already thinking of the sound, the flawless tone, not of Beethoven. Whistler has caught him, poised him, posed him, another butterfly, and alive. Imagine Sarasate painted by Watts, or indeed in anyway but Whistler's! I remember Whistler's impatience with my praise of Ysaye, whom he had never heard, because the praise seemed like a poor compliment to Sarasate, whose marvellous purity of tone he recalled with an intolerant and jealous delight.

I have always thought that one of the surest tests of technique in music is to be found in the various renderings of Beethoven's *Kreutzer Sonata*. Sarasate, when he played it, gave to my senses all the effect of the nerves of the Spaniard on the nerves of the morbid and feverish and passionate and all but inhuman music. When I heard Busoni and Ysaye play it, the effect of it on me was that the thing was neither Beethoven nor Ysaye, but it was made out of their meeting, it was music, not abstract, but embodied in sound; and just that miracle could never occur again, though others like it might be repeated forever. When Ysaye stood, an almost shapeless mass of flesh, the wonder began when he struck the first note; the eyelids and the eyebrows began to move, as if the eyes saw the sound and were drawing it in luxuriously, with a kind

of sleepy ecstasy as one draws in perfume out of a flower.

The playing of Ysaye is a great mystery; it is the mystery of the flesh that cries in the nerves of the man and in the nerves of the strings of the violin; a mystery of the flesh in which beauty is almost sinful. His whole art is the art of Swinburne, as Kreisler's, by comparison, is the art of Browning. You see the music in the great black figure, that sways like a python—like Salammbo's black Python "*La tête du Python apparaît. Il descendait lentement, comme une goutte d'eau qui coule le long d'un mur, rampa outre les étoffes épendues, puis, la jeune collie contre le sol, il se releva tout droit.*" Is not that the veritable image of the violinist? in his eyes that blink, and seem almost to shed luxurious tears; in the face like an actor's mask, enigmatic, quivering with emotion—as serpents do—listening to the sounds as they float up (as the cobras in India listen when the snake-charmer fascinates them), a mask moulded into the shape of sound—Ysaye listens for that sound in the depths of Beethoven and on the heights of Mozart; it comes to him, naked and living, and he clothes it with silken garments, as if it were a woman.

As for Kreisler's rendering of the *Kreutzer Sonata* the other afternoon, all I can say is that was magnificent, wonderful and perfect. He played magically; he has witchcraft; he is possessed with the passion of the music, to the point of oblivion of all except that miraculous music. There, instant by instant, from the beginning to the end, a beauty which had never been in the world came into the world; a new thing was created—for he is a creative

artist—which lived, died, having revealed itself to all those who were capable of receiving it. There is a wild, a savage richness, in those harmonies, lovely in the midst of menace; exciting exotic, fascinating; and, in a word, intoxicating. Kreisler said to me in the green room: "This is one of the most wonderful things ever written for violin and piano; it is not only wonderful, it is adorable. It has a disembodied ecstasy; the rhythm produces in me something of the sublimity of sensation produced by the service of the Mass—the rhythms themselves are a kind of religious ceremonial."

To hear Fritz Kreisler play the *Chaconne*, after hearing Jan Hambourg play it is to realize all that music can gain or suffer at the hands of its interpreters. When he played the *Chaconne*, it became articulate from the first touch of the bow on the strings. Every note lived, and with perfect ripeness; what had seemed a tedious musical exercise became a clear, various, positively engaging thing. But there is nothing that Kreisler plays quite so well as Beethoven, and the divine violin concerto has perhaps never been better played by anyone. How infinitely finer more appropriate as a form is a violin than a piano concerto! How faultlessly do instrument and instruments combine, without any of the unnatural union of orchestra and piano! And this particular concerto is great even among Beethoven's works. His fingers, trained to swift accuracy like race horses play from the heart, with checked passion; the notes throb, and their shriek is withdrawn from the strings, they cry with veiled lovely voices. There is emotion in every note

of the music, but emotion mastered by art, as Beethoven mastered it.

As for Mischa Elman, for instance, the strings speak, when he sets them to reveal some beauty in music, with a perfect directness, a breadth, a gravity, which are mature already. And now, after hearing this or any other violinist, Ysaye, Sarasate, Kubelik, the two or three people who stand out above all the others, how do we hear Kreisler? Kubelik dazzles us and sets us to follow him without wonder. Sarasate stirs our blood, and fills our ears with a tone which might be either fire or water. Ysaye lulls us half asleep, that we may meet him half way in a dream. But Kreisler is gloriously awake, and transports us, not higher than the earth, into a living glory of sound. What others can do, each in his own way, Kreisler can do as well or better; and he can do all that these others can do. He is without excess and without default; the perfection which he attains is that perfection of Giorgione's, beyond Titian's, because its level never falls below a certain divine height.

Kreisler's tone has in it a thrilling purity, and it can cry or warble like a bird; there are both cries and warblings in the first movement of the concerto. His playing has that energy which comes to flower in grace, with a supple concealed agility, a skill which is never allowed to tell for itself, to mean anything apart from what it expresses. Sometimes his body sways under the music, yet is always stronger than any wave of emotion, which it overcomes gallantly. And his sense of proportion is so fine that any mere cadenza, played by him, becomes a link, not an interruption, so clearly and deli-



cately is it put in its proper place, its due parenthesis.

Certainly in Fritz Kreisler we have the greatest violinist now living. When he played the Mozart concerto, he gave us all Mozart with the god's touch on it; and not only that brightness and gaiety which everyone can give us, but the strength, the poignancy of beauty, the manly joy, which his bow creates for us at its first touch of the strings. The cadenza was fiery and faultless, a rapture, and the abandonment to it was an assertion of mastery. When Kreisler plays, the music inspires him, he sways under it as a strong tree sways tightly under a great wind. The music takes him for its voice, and becomes audible through him, yet it is he who has the power to master inspiration, to translate the divine message with his faultless playing.

I expected, when the Mozart was over, no finer enchantment; finer, perhaps, I did not get, but a thing mightier, a deeper revelation, came out of the Brahms concerto. When Kreisler played it, it seemed greater than Mozart, not because it was greater, but because it spoke in a more modern voice and because the player could put more of himself and his art into it. The cadenza in Mozart seemed to give Kreisler all that he needed, but the first cadenza in Brahms had all Dionysus in it, with all Apollo. A great wave of sound, as swift and easy as a wave of the sea, seemed to have caught and carried one, resistlessly, into some new paradise. Throughout this concerto, Kreisler was himself and Brahms, almost more potently than I have heard him be at once Beethoven and himself.

When I heard Kreisler play the

warm, showy and effective music of Max Bruch, with the Hungarian cadences of the concerto leaping and stinging in the true gipsy manner, I could almost fancy some gipsy strain in the player. For all his profound gravity, his breadth, his immense restraint, there is something which boils underneath and is part of the motive power; and there are moments when I am reminded by some queer undercurrent, in his miraculous playing, of some thrilling and unexpected voice which one hears in Hungary, in a gypsy orchestra. Only while with them thus sakt is scattered and falls loosely, with Kreisler it is a saviour, and adds just that "strangeness" without which there can be no exquisite beauty.

After one of Kreisler's concerts I spent some time with him alone in the artists' room in Queen's Hall. As I began to ask him about technique, he said: "We Austrians are a mixture of races. —Spanish, Gypsy, Hungarian, Latin and Slavonic; God knows what else! I adore Budapest and the musicians there. Yes, there is nothing in music more wonderful than *Tristan and Iseult*. As for me, whenever I play I lose sight of everything except the music; I see nothing but that, I hear nothing but that. I am absolutely absorbed—absolutely oblivious—whenever I am playing. It seems to me that Beethoven, Bach (what a divine creator!) and Mozart have left something over of what is dynamic in their genius for us who are artists."

He spoke with vehemence; his voice has a distinct thrill in it; his huge brown eyes hide, reveal, fire, slumbering and passionate, animal—the eyes of a wild beast, the eyes of a gypsy, and their level eyebrows; even their gestures. He



has an absolute simplicity; he is primitive; primitive in the essential, the elemental sense of the word. Like every other artist I have met, he has a fascination which is entirely his own; none of the inhuman fascination of Pachmann; either when I am alone with him or when playing in public, the sounds torture him, as a wizard is tortured by the shapes he has invoked. Pachmann, as I have written, has the head of a monk who has had commerce with the Devil, and it is whispered that he has sold his soul to the diabolical instru-

ment, which, since buying it, can speak in a human voice. Yet I find in both an absolute reverence—an almost God-like reverence—for music as music; only, while Kreisler belongs essentially to the world itself and to the world of music, Pachmann's physical disquietude is but a sign of what it has cost him to venture outside humanity, into music. He lives in a divine hallucination, chills us a little with its "airs from heaven or hell," and breaks down for an instant the too solid walls of the world, showing us the gulf.

## Upholding The World

*(Based on a Jewish Folk-belief)*

By EDWARD SAPIR

They are the seven humble ones that hold  
The world, this weary world, within their palms,  
Chaunting unending toll of prayer-psalms  
Under the breath. Their hearts are beaten gold  
Upon the anvil of the Lord; their old,  
Thin voices somewhere singing praise are balms  
Upon our wounds. O come and shower alms!  
They are but shivering beggars in the cold.

But shivering beggars in the cold are they,  
Yet do they hold the world by night and day,  
And who these seven are no man may tell.  
Give alms! Give and yet give, nor mark too well!  
Let not one of these seven faint away,  
Else shall the world slip down and burn in Hell!

## Kreymborg's Letter

Como, Italy.

ONE no longer wonders about the exodus to Europe on the part of American artists. After one has left Paris behind, se-sawed over the Alps and rolled down into Italy, the single reason for leaving home, if one required no other, is spread out everywhere; it is absurdly cheap to live in Italy. Even Como, haven of the tourist, and presumably beyond the reach of the poetic income, is cause for refreshing a spirit a little old and weary from everlasting conflict with the economic problem back on the Island of Manhattan. One has never had before a huge square furnished room, immune against heat, with a stone floor and cement walls and three French windows opening onto a piazza inviting one into or onto a water calm and ultramarine; one has never had this, I mean, for less than fifty cents a day, as here. And if one doesn't mind shelling out ten or fifteen cents a morning for a *dejeuner* of coffee, rolls and honey; with a seat outdoors under the shade of a tree, or forty or fifty cents for a *colazione* or *pranzo* comprising more food than one can conveniently dispose of, with (if you'll risk one of the highest wines on the wine list) a bottle of the white vintage of Capri for a quarter extra, one can actually exist at Como—and for still less away from the tourist. And if one must have his stroll at night, through winding alleys untouched by modernity, and his American amusement in the form of a movie, not so much now for

the sake of the screen as for the plunge into an auditorium of grinning faces turned to you with an outright curiosity, as much as to say "What brought this queer fish to us?" and doesn't mind the highest seat in the house at ten cents with the music of the Italian speech billowing in gratis, and doesn't object to a weirdly garbled version of "Intolerance," with a prospect of the Carpentier-Dempsey fracas the night after, why, no special effort is required of underpinnings set free from accustomed paths by the constant invitation of the strange. All of this has been said before, but in view of the economic plight of the artist in America, bears repeating.

One sees for the first time a looseness in his walk, an easier freedom of speech; the beginnings of an unconscious gesture, something more than a stray, wan smile. The American artist is contented in Europe, as he deserves to be. He has earned unlimited credit. He has come through in the face of the most tremendous odds ever set against the growth of an artist; the egregious difficulty of finding breathing space in a soil almost unanimously given over to materialism. Today, he stands on a level with his far more richly nurtured brothers of the continent. I see, for example, no poetry over here for the American knee to bend to, as it has bent before, so readily, blindly, and with such sycophancy. The American has come through, and if he is over here now, in so many forms, he has arrived, not as one who wholly asks for some-

thing, a smattering of erudition and the like, but as one who brings his personal contribution, strange or unformed or vague as much of it may be, to the great storehouse of culture. Artistic Europe can use the fellow. It is about as exhausted as war-ridden Europe, and as sorely in need of invigorating impulses as economic Europe is in need of the American greenback.

An amusing sidelight on this question of the American abroad shone recently in Milan on the occasion of a concert by the Harvard Glee Club, which is now touring Europe. One must confess that the Verdi Auditorium, where the program was scheduled, was crowded with Milanese, most of whom came to laugh at the barbarous Americans and to vent hysterical badinage. There was, it must be confessed furthermore, every opportunity for witticism before the first note was sung. The sixty gentlemen from Cambridge were attired in full dress regalia, all of them were pale and gaunt with seriousness and quite a number of them were adorned with black-rimmed goggles of approved Charles River dimensions and design. Even to an American, away from home scarcely two months, these sixty grave young souls, laden with philosophic ponderosity, seemed preposterous in a milieu ancient with folk song and singing. And their first number called for a chorale by Palestrina!

The auditorium was soon lost, as were the men on the platform, behind the haze of the opening measures. The place changed mysteriously to a chapel

reverent with chanting, under the spell of which all worldliness, and especially worldly or individual differences, melted away. The great Italian mystic worked the quick, unconscious miracle through the round mouths of sixty curious people from an utterly foreign shore. And the audience, descendants of the mystic, were transported to enthusiasm and the Italian cry of "bis." The same incident was reported from other Italian cities, as well as from communities in France and Switzerland.

One still hears vituperation for America on every hand. Many folk delight in "doing" the American, in submitting him to the most subtle and even the most obvious forms of petty thievery. This is partly and no doubt justly due to the enormous advantage we enjoy in the matter of foreign exchange, and, politically, to our withdrawal from the League of Nations. But let an American come with a painting or a play or a novel—things completely removed from Wall Street or the Bourse—and nationality is forgotten. He is greeted for what he is. I may be foolishly optimistic about the chemical properties of art. But when one has witnessed, all the way from childhood, and under constantly varied circumstances, a complete change away from the individual norm in the presence of some direct communication from another individual through the medium of interpretation from a third (i. e., a composer being sung by a singer to an audience; all three distinct entities), one may put in a claim or two for art as a channel to brotherhood, however ephemeral.

ALFRED KREYMBORG.

# Reviews

## THE PLAYS OF ALFRED KREYMBORG

THE whimsical, the fantastic, all the dear inconsequential doings of fairies, are not merely born of the dream-caprice of the special mind, they are an integral part of the spiritual life of the race. Fantasy not only shuts sound-proof door on the too violent and arduous adventures of reality; in permitting a return to the child-state, where no intellectual morality demands resolution and where inaction has no consequences, it allows evasion of that responsibility that the spirit's impotence creates for itself—responsibility for endless processions of affirmations, each exploding like a bubble at the moment of greatest expansion. Yet this instinct for whimsy in daily life only finds full liberation in the happy scheming of children. The adult, complex and grotesquely shy, stifles the impulse of *Let us Pretend* and finds makeshift satisfaction in the elves and fairies created to supply his need.

This native playfulness so heavily denied an outlet is just what Kreymborg makes manifest in his earlier book, *"Plays for Poem Mimes."* Here his most joyous miming takes place on no remote playground of the spirit but accompanies the daily and common gestures of being. He does not create symbols as much as express through familiar and inanimate things that henceforth remain endowed with a quaint and sometimes a sinister life. Thus his fancy is not extraneous to, but involved in and dominating, reality through which it meanders like a dancing thread.

In these plays he is only rarely the satirist, and then a satirist with an unfamiliar grin—peeping through drawn shutters at the delicately grotesque but never monstrous show. His laughter here is never bitter, seldom even ironic. In *"Lima Beans,"* for instance, there is no mockery only a gentle self-raillery as the ego dances in amused recognition of the innate drollery of its own reactions. It is laughter turned inward, life mimicing itself, making a tender ritual with quaint and elf-like gestures.

Kreymborg combines in his art—and this applies to his poetry as well as to his drama—a sadness and drollery, irony and that sorcery that is related to the early, religious gestures of primitive peoples reacting to the sentiment of wonder. With all he has an elfin effrontry, a certain piquant impudence—qualities that from time immemorial have been characteristic of the art of puppeteers. Indeed Kreymborg writes as though he might be descended from generations of puppeteers. In him their diverse gestures seem to have fused into a single and unique art that contains in its dancing words motion, rhythm and design. And his is a dancing mind that postures, sways and pirouettes though only to its own inevitable rhythms. For he is singularly impervious to influences that usually affect the impressionable artist clay. He does not reach out to others, absorb and assimilate. He is not in the literary sense carnivorous in that he does not need to hunt, much less to kill, for his mental larder. And I feel in these



plays a daringly challenging yet illusive sprite that incongruously makes the sign of the tongue in cheek—nay more, the sign of the thumb and nose—and side-steps the flung stone.

I feel too, a gallant spirit that dances till it is stricken, and when the blow falls it neither whines nor curses. Instead there is silence . . . and consciousness flowing out as through a wound, as in the wistful shadow-play, "Blue and Green," in which life spreads into itself like emptied water:

Let sorrow have its way with us  
Like the sea with a stone.

And in all Kreymborg's fantasy, as in the poignant grotesques of "Cloyd Head" and in the wierdly lovely imaginings of Jeannette Marks, there is this sense of vast pity of life.

In "Plays for Poem Mimes" he turns into by-paths of the mind, crevices like those covered fissures of earth where unsuspected flowers are and ferns grow delicately like a fine hair. And he alternately dances and meanders, using his divining rod with a queer quick turn of the thought that leaves you wondering if the gesture is one of naivete or finesse.

But in his latest delightfully named book, "Plays for Merry Andrews" this wistful fancy has become harder, less subjective, taking to itself more palpable contours, and the fairy playground is retreating . . . retreating . . . the dramatist has gained much in technique and mastery of form. He no longer gives me a sense as of dissolved life spilling and wasting itself. His thought is harder at the edges. So too is the laughter that is no longer of such a light and silvery timbre—guffawing of gnomes well out of sight behind shel-

tering leaves. The sprite has now come into the open and hurls his shafts in the sun. And the laughter is louder—and a little grimmer.

All hail to laughter! and to all the great and bitter laughers.

More salutary than blackened doll-men, high-jigging for the wind's sport, or moving heads twelve feet lifted and dripping on prancing feet, this laughter that impales as on a spike the mean and amazing gestures of humanity.

Not such jagged and titanic laughter scratching its way through shut teeth as was Heine's and Voltaire's, nor acrid, lava-flowing as Moliere's, this in "Plays for Merry Andrews," but a pealing laughter too shrill to be silvery. It is long-drawn as screech owl's and as penetrating in "Vote the New Moon." This "Toy Play" though given by living actors in that most valiant and uncommercial of little theatres, The Provençetown, is essentially a play for puppets. It will undoubtedly be further heard from. It is a biting satire of America—America politically miming and solemnly swaying in Jehovahian mask.

Two phases of development stand out in these plays. One is exemplified in the more objective treatment and broader humor of the American Folk Play, "Uneasy Street." This describes a wider circle than the writer has hitherto reached without his immediate arc of consciousness, and reveals his new apprehension of character as manifested by types in action. The other, in "The Silent Waiter," shows his growing awareness of those submerged emotional conflicts, bitter silent struggles of egos bent on devouring each other, that are rarely talked about by the participants. In this "tragi-comedy"

Kreymborg goes deeper than he has yet gone into the stored experiences in the silence within him. And in his accompaniment of the sinister-grotesque to its subjective realism he symbolizes a part of consciousness, that, because informed by our fears rather than by our desires, has been more uneasily disowned than our spiritual fairyland.

The action of this strange little play takes place in the dimly lighted window of a cafe, where two men sit drinking on the wedding eve of the younger. The two are seen only in profile, and between them the entrances and exits of the waiter whose head is hidden by the upper frame of the window, until at the end of the play he stoops forward and in doing so reveals a death's head. In the management of light and shadow, appearance and disappearance of glasses, etc., the suggestion of the grotesque is carried without the action.

Kreymborg has here achieved a surcharged atmosphere, that recalls the early Maeterlinck, while in "Hal" he probes even if he does not quite explore, a more complex consciousness than Maeterlinck ever hinted. At times, when the two men touch and move in a tense circuit about the differing conceptions of the absent girl they both love, he creates the effect of spirit spilling over the edges of its human contours, life emerging into life as colors run together. I feel this sense of fused and fluid life—though expressed in another medium and by a very different writer—in Waldo Frank's "Dark Mother." In Frank's work it is a darkly rushing, green-swirling torrent that throws up bubbles like drowning breaths, light-shot and golden bubbles that drift and break one upon the

other, swirl mistily and fall apart to be sucked down again into the dully thundering river. In Kreymborg's piquant dialogues this life current is a thin stream, sometimes a mere silvery thread that holds as a string its beads the quaintly doll-like bodies. In "The Silent Waiter" it might be likened to severed veins, to which you could hardly apply the bitter verb *to bleed*, so gently do they slip one into the other.

The dialogue is in tense rhythmic prose, moving in rapid time. Its incomplete phrases are freighted with implications of the unspoken word. The writer is not now watching a ray of fantasy dance over dormant or acquiescent life coiled beneath, but life itself arisen and inexorably advancing, demanding stare for stare. And for a third of the play he meets it with a fairly unflinching eye. Hal, after disclosing that he has been loved and discarded by the girl whom his friend is about to marry, paints to the as yet only vaguely shaken boy that girl as the boy does not know her—monstrous, implacable, demanding not only service of her lover's self...adventure of such service like a walk to the pier's end and back may be exhausted in an hour...but the daily annihilation of his very self, the disintegration and painful reforming of his life's contours that must be stretched to embrace her crystal thought of him. And you picture Jim's fate and after him an endless procession of victims—each living case to be made malleable in its own fire and bent and tortured into shape for the unchanging arch of her ideal. Even when Hal, warily as one breaking evil news, proposes the death pact, Jim's willingness to die before experience at the sug-

gestion of the stronger may be accepted as possible though unlikely. But now you find—and with no hint of self-deception or complexity of motive—that the older man has decided that his friend shall die solely that their double sacrifice may have a salutary effect on the spiritual nature of the girl, who after such a “recrudescence of the search and the discovery” will realize “that her love for a man is merely love for herself.” This attempt to supply Hal with a noble motive is an evasion of life—an evasion that has the effect of suddenly relaxing the emotional tension. It is as though life, at the flicker of an eye from her unlovely nakedness had slid out of her persuader’s grip. Nor is she again to be cajoled even by the very beautiful ritual of echoing toasts and clinking glasses with which the two men approach the final “sip.”

Yet in this little drama of spiritual exploration Kreymborg has greatly adventured. It remains one of his most interesting and provocative plays, at once a promise and a prophecy. It seems to be his instinctive recoil from the harshness of the actual, that evasion that fantasy alone so graciously permits, that has made less successful the fusion of those darker currents of the fantastic and the real than in his earlier plays when both were nearer the shining surface.

There is, however, one play that I wish had not been included in this group. “At The Sign of the Thumb and Nose,” “an unmorality play” seems to have been exhumed from some early manuscript—where it had much better have been left to discolor in peace. Its humour lumbers on hob-nailed feet and its “unmorality” has the fatal smugness and certitude of early youth.

“Monday,” “a Lame Minuet,” is, however, a sparkling comedy through which life dances as no one but Kreymborg could make it dance in a New York tenement. But it is in “Uneasy Street” that I think the artist touches his highest achievement. In this rollicking but penetrating and wholly delightful study of Varick or any other street, Kreymborg happily announces the arrival of the American Folk Play. It is remarkable for its broad and confident treatment of types almost untouched in American literature, types that might be called peasants of the asphalt. Here rich and soft as a carpet of daisies on a city lot is the whole cloth of life. Here too, more than in the earlier plays, the artist projects his characters and steps back into the shadow. In “When The Willow Nods” in Poem Mimes, for instance, you are conscious of the elfin troubadour though you may yield yourself to the illusion of the delicate apparitions he conjures. In “Blue and Green” and in “People Who Die” you hear the indrawn sound of the lives that have touched the poet’s life still murmuring in his consciousness as in a shell. Even in “Vote the New Moon” he permits you—the while aware of your host—to peep with him through his colored window at the great national farce of election day. In all it is as though a diaphanous fabric floats from the creator and swirls about his children till he and they undulate with the motions of one dancing body. And in some of the little intimate dramas this has a gripping effect. It would have greatly weakened “Uneasy Street.” But here the people are palpable and independent entities. You can almost



smell their separate smells as they sidle into the undertaker's parlor and circle wearily about the ebony coffin. And though this play has neither sentimentality nor any kind of cheap appeal, its broad and earthy humour and quality of suspense supply the better elements of a popular success—if a Broadway manager will ever lift his head far enough above his rut to see it.

And much of Kreymborg's work has qualities that should bring it into living circuit with the people. His use of rituals alone should establish *rapport* with an audience. Roaring rituals of steel, throwing off impressions from the glowing die, offer only product of the creative gesture. But the rituals of art and religion in some sense communize the creative gesture itself. The almost hypnotic power of ritual has been one of the chief drawing elements not only of all religions, but of all group movements. Societies come into being for a purpose, a theory or an ideal, but they live by and eventually die in their rituals that continue to function while holding dry bones together. The admission to a rite is as a reaching of flags to emptily waving hands. It raises the general level of self-esteem by enabling the most insignificant to join in the collective dance. And the immediacy of appeal of any work of art is largely determined by its ritual. This is absent in the work of some of the great creators. Dostoevsky, for instance, and Whitman were both too engrossed, one with the truth of changing contours contained in each successive moment and the other in surrounding all contours with his own, to intone their odysseys except at occasional moments. Their work makes way by the

pressure of the enormous life it carries; it does not make contacts, it overwhelms. But Poe's poetry owes much of its wide if tardy appeal to its ritual. Unluckily for him it was his own, calling for exposition rather than for joyous recognition. This applies even more to the paintings of Van Gough, whose ritual the crowd has yet to learn by heart.—I use the word crowd in the limited sense; Van Gough will never be popular in any other.—And Kreymborg, too, naturally expresses himself in a ritual that, unfamiliar because rigorously his own, is yet blythe invitation to the dance.

Puppet plays and literature besides their universal appeal for children, have always appealed primarily to the peasantry and artists both of whom retain in their essence something of the eternal child. Yet this country, that must have in the blood of its masses an admixture of the rich peasant cultures of the world, has in the spiritual sense no peasantry. Its workers, whether children of uprooted emigrants or descendants of pioneers, are aspirants for, if they have not already graduated into, the great middle class. And they are too "wise" in the street gamin sense of the word to confide in their own emotions. Their technical information, superficially absorbed, has created a spurious scepticism. Individually—in any intellectual sense—they may be said not to function. Yet in the group sense Americans are the most malleable of peoples. With a child-like confidence, amounting to hero-worship in their leaders and hypnotically open to suggestion, they are a people whose art sense could be developed by intelligent direction. But those who have power



to direct—editors, theatrical managers, critics and intellectuals generally—share their intellectual timidity. With few exceptions even those who head the few real art movements of the country are secretly influenced by each other, while at the same time they fear to lose to each other austere report. Thus instead of independent individual judgments we have gobs of amalgamated opinion. And though the group is smaller and more intellectually aristocratic it is none the less a group. Sometimes this want of self-belief acts inversely. Thus when a man like Sandburg gets some popular acclaim intellectuals begin to look askance at him, because lacking spiritual self-reliance they fear to become identified with the crowd.

These contributing causes—an overgrown middle class whose well paid servants in the art-trade already supply the stabilized product, and the universal lack of self-belief in individuals—explain why little theatres flicker for a golden moment and go out, and why authentic artists like Alfred Kreymborg are denied a hearing in their own country. The plays of Kreymborg are not merely the intellectual experiments of a craftsman interested in dramatic innovations. They are the creations of an intensely individual artist who is not a follower, but an explorer and breaker of new paths—an artist whose importance to the young American drama has not yet begun to be estimated. This drama is already at our doors, but like the fruit that is left to rot upon the ground in some of the Western states, it awaits the artistic middleman to purvey it to the crowd.

## THE PORTRAIT OF MR. W. H.

BY OSCAR WILDE

(Mitchell Kennerley, 1921).

THE full title of the much talked-of "Oscar Wilde find" just published by Mr. Mitchell Kennerley (New York) is as follows: "*The Portrait of Mr. W. H., as written by Oscar Wilde some time after the publication of his Essay of the same title, and now first printed from the original enlarged manuscript which for twenty-six years has been lost to the world.*"

Be it said at once that there can be no vexing question as regards the authenticity of the new version. Neither the publisher nor the public have been taken in by a specious counterfeit—it is *pure Wilde* throughout, down to the punctuation marks. This will be a more grateful word to the general reader than to the wicked few who would like to have seen a controversy raised over the genuineness of the "find."

The question of its literary importance, is another matter, and it will of course be variously viewed by those who are relatively indifferent to the author and those who are of the pronounced Wildean cult. A compromise opinion would, I venture to say, make no difficulty of accepting the work in its present form as a valuable addition to the Wilde legacy.

In its older and slighter version, "*The Portrait of Mr. W. H.*" has been so long before the public that a criticism of the theory put forth in this essay respecting the identity of the person to whom Shakespeare's Sonnets were addressed, or of its literary treatment, is hardly

called for at this time. Still, a few remarks may be offered in compliment to the treasure-trove for which so many devoted Wildeans (or should one say Oscarians?) are now giving thanks, and the same may possibly be of service to the less ardently concerned reader.

Early in his career Oscar Wilde took up the paradox, saw that it was good, and labored to apply it both to the conduct of his life and the expression of his literary talent. It was not original with him—Baudelaire, for instance, who contributed much to the Wildean masque, had done the trick before him, though with far less noisy *réclame*, for the French are not so easily shocked as their Anglo-Saxon neighbors, and they are, besides, more tolerant of the vagaries of "genius," moral and otherwise. In one of his later confessions Wilde laments his addiction to the Paradox and attributes to it the fatal misfortunes that put an end to his career of splendor and success. In this he was doubtless right, but it is curious to note how his inalienable Paradox—not to be divorced from him either in life or in death—is now again working for his literary rehabilitation! Is it not delightfully manifest in the recovery of this lost MS.? Are not the many editions of his books that have appeared within the past decade overwhelming evidence of the fact? Hardly, one thinks, could the man who died so wretchedly and obscurely in Paris twenty-one years ago, be made to realize the change that has since befallen his literary fame, or credit the full reversal of that dread attainer under which he was powerless to create, and indeed lacked heart to live out the normal term of life. Here in truth is the Paradox working a mira-

cle for him who perished its martyr and idolator.

To those—it must be granted—elect and initiate few who so interpret the destiny of Oscar Wilde, there is a peculiar gratification in the discovery of the present work. For it exhibits the Great Fantastic in his most plausible and fascinating vein of paradox—not seriously deceiving us for a moment, but always enthralling and delighting us, and not least of all when he laughs away the whimsical hypothesis which he had constructed with so much artful care and far-sought erudition. Never, perhaps, was so agreeable a book built up on matter so slight; the artist has only a cobweb filament to go upon, yet his careless ease and hardihood are maintained to the end, when he makes his ironical bow, without having to blush for a single awkwardness.

There is, of course, a more pregnant and esoteric reason why your true Wildean will hug himself over this book. In several of the added or interpolated portions, the author exposes with flawless phrase the very heart of his own idiosyncrasy—that which still remains a tragic, insoluble enigma to some of the closest students of his life and work. This brief quotation will sufficiently illustrate my meaning.

"As from opal dawns to sunsets of withered rose I read and re-read them (the Sonnets of Shakespeare) in garden or chamber, it seemed to me that I was deciphering the story of a life that had once been mine, unrolling the record of a romance that, without my knowing it, had colored the very texture of my nature, had dyed it with strange and subtle dyes. Art, as so often happens, had taken the place of personal experience.

I felt as if I had been initiated into the secret of that passionate friendship, that love of beauty and beauty of love of which Marsilio Ficino tells us, and of which the Sonnets, in their noblest and purest significance, may be held to be the perfect expression."

A considerable portion of the new text deals with the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, and deals with her, one is glad to note, in a manner consonant with Wilde's clear-eyed sanity—when he is acting the critic in sober earnest, be it understood. He refuses to identify her with the too convenient Mary Fitton, Pembroke's one-time mistress and maid-of-honor to Elizabeth; shrewdly, as we think, discarding a theory which has added boresomely to the literature of the Sonnets, though acute Shakespeareans like our own Dr. Rolfe have had no difficulty in ventilating it. Wilde thinks the woman thus alluded to in the Sonnets was probably the profligate wife of some old and wealthy citizen, and he indulges his fancy in supposing Willie Hughes, his imaginary boy actor, to have been for a time the toy of her passion. All this section is new, i. e., formed no part of the heretofore known Essay, and is full of curious matter, together with no lack of brilliant perversity.

The book is handsomely printed in an attractive format, and is noticeably free of typographical blunders. It carries as frontispiece a reduced facsimile of the last page of Wilde's manuscript.

MICHAEL MONAHAN.

## THE GLASS OF FASHION

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MIRRORS OF DOWNING STREET."

(Doran, 1921.)

**H**ERE is a powerful, an unsparing, indictment of contemporary Fashion—that Fashion which is the apex of the social structure. That Fashion which, in a setting of shrill display and exuberant self-advertisement, flourishes in the glare of a perpetual spotlight. That Fashion which, in its morals, its manners, its attitude toward life, sets an example for the rest of the world to follow. For its influence is incalculable. And "it is not a question . . . whether Fashion is worse than it was or better, it is a question whether it is a help or a hindrance, whether it is adequate to the present crisis in the fortunes of civilization."

This is not a book of snarling, envious disparagement. It is not abusive. The author has not collected a mass of vicious gossip and then swaggered forward to call names at the top of his voice. It is very able, constructive criticism; clear-sighted; intensely sincere. It is also scrupulously fair.

Fashion is not condemned upon hearsay or backstairs evidence, but in the persons of its representatives, Mrs. Asquith, Colonel Repington, and their friends—certain sections of the aristocracy of England—it is allowed to speak in its own defense. Apparently it does not realize that a defense is necessary, and recklessly, hopelessly, it gives itself away. It has become so broad that it is amazingly shallow. Mrs. Asquith belongs to that "insurgent class

of the commercial rich which broke into society soon after the second Reform Bill, and during the years of King Edward's reign, completely overwhelmed it." Colonel Repington is of the aristocracy. They show us a bizarre and ungracious society whose chief requisite for leadership is an innate vulgarity of soul.

In the midst of the demoralizing clamor and egotistic atmosphere which pervades it, what has become of the great traditions of the English aristocracy? Have they been lost irrevocably, buried beneath the debris of discarded virtues—decency, dignity, moral earnestness, self-restraint, good manners? Or will women like Lady Harrowby, Lady Frances Ryder, the Hon. Mrs. Henry Edwardes and Mrs. Graham Murray, whose lives are guided by the old ideals and traditions and who are the true representatives of aristocracy in that they both recognize and fulfil its obligations, will they and the many others like them be able to restore Fashion to its equilibrium?

The author states the case for each side with stimulating directness and brilliancy. With rare insight and a strict regard for truth he acknowledges

the virtues of Fashion as well as the shortcomings of aristocracy.

If, as he believes, the world is moving forward towards a far greater renaissance than that of the sixteenth century, to whom are we to look for guidance? "Can Fashion help us, can Mammon help us, to enter into a new birth of the human spirit?" There should be at the head of the state an aristocracy of intelligence. "Intelligence must become a passion." For in spite of "all the goodness and sweetness that exists in England," the state of public morality forces him to the conclusion that "*goodness is not enough*... Aristotle made a vital distinction between the excellence of conduct and the higher excellence of intelligence." And the author believes that "our salvation will come from the good of all classes—from the good among the aristocracy, the good among the numerous middle classes, the good among the manual workers"—and that this work of salvation will proceed from the knowledge that, "beyond obedience to morals, there is a boundless region of spiritual excellence waiting for the exploration of mankind. The good will become our aristocracy when they understand that goodness is not enough."

ALICE SESSUMS LEVY.





# THE DOUBLE DEALER

DECEMBER, 1921.

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# The DOUBLE DEALER

*".....I can deceive them both by speaking the truth."*

## SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI

*"... the glory that was Greece,  
And the grandeur that was Rome."*

**W**HAT tragic irony stalks between these lines—what gusto of the gods—what taunt—what drollery! The glory that was Greece now aureoles the bootblacks of earth. The grandeur that was Rome rests on the fame of the nations' fruit vendors. Alexandria, Babylon, Nineveh, Troy, Pompeii, Athens, proud Rome, where are your sons today? Well may the moral-hound point his lesson. What a lesson it is! Drive it home, Cagliostro, sink it deep! Penetrate our pompous egos: we, the quick, the free, the brave; we, the monarchs of mundanity; we, the overlords of life—we too must fail.

Centuries lapse, aeons fade, cycles wheel. The moving finger pens its legend. A "heathen" era re-arrives. This planet as ever is old, but not older than is the wont of planets. Yet even planets fail, though ever so imperceptibly to their parasites. Earth's face, physically, remains quite the same with perhaps an indication here and there of a few more bumps, wrinkles, lines. Boundaries give way to boundaries, races to races, names to names, that is

all. But where are Londontown and Paris? And where are Berlinburg and Manhattan? And where are the sons of London, Paris, Berlin and Manhattan? Tell us, Cagliostro, sink it deep. Where is the glory of Britain, the grandeur of America?

Alas, the one aureoles the flunkies and butlers of the great Jap-African Dynasty; the other rests on the fame of yeggs and soda jerkers in the United Monarchies of Russ-Asia. Wherein there is victuals for thought and a sop to the vanities of vermin. Disarmament, civilization, unity, peace, the brotherhood of peoples! Bah, words, tall empty phrases! The Arabs' formula is all: "I, thou, these and this, alike will pass and pass, and be resolved within the crucibles of Time." The rest is macaroni.

## THE IMMORTAL BUFFOON.

**D**O you recall, Customers, the names Public Opinion gave Napoleon in the days when he made Europe tremble? Public Opinion called him brute—I think "abyssmal brute"—hellion, violator of helpless women, murderer of infants, Hun. Does Posterity believe all that about him? Not on your

photogravure! You and I, being part of Posterity as well as of Public Opinion, have made him hero; a glorious, silent man of battle; the father, who knew not his own child, but nonetheless the father, of a new firmly united France. He figures sternly in Posterity's text-books for growing children—Public Opinionettes. Do you remember in the early Seventeen Hundreds what Public Opinion, especially in Europe, saw in the American Colonies? A nest of revolutionists, anarchists, degenerates, bandits, assassins. Yet Posterity insists that the Colonies were the early flowering of the frail seed of Freedom, the hope of Europe, the hope of the world. What did and does Public Opinion think of Lincoln, the steamboat, the airplane, air raids, poison gas? What has, and what is Posterity going to think about them? This much be certain of, Customers: whatever Public Opinion thinks or thought about them, chances are Posterity didn't and *won't*! The chances are, for example, if past experience is a fair prophecy of future experience, that Posterity won't agree with Public Opinion about Woodrow Wilson; nor about—dare I whisper his name?—the well-known Kaiser; nor about Bolshevik Russia, any more than Posterity agreed with Public Opinion on colonial America.

Therefore, I am constrained, Customers, to suggest that we pause for a moment and laugh an amiable laugh at that much of ourselves which is Public Opinion. We are monstrous clever fellows, you and I, who can enjoy a joke. And where is there a more satisfactory joke than the spectacle of uninformed, mind-bound, Public Opinion, who after all these years ought to know better,

strutting bumptiously about trying to make himself look like solemn erudite, periwigged Judge Posterity? And the cream of the jest is: the old Judge is dotty himself, and Public Opinion doesn't even suspect it!

## JAUNDICE AND THE JU-JUBE

**I**F one should ask me what I consider the vitalest humor bequeathed to *genus homo*, instantler, I should respond (were I given to persiflage) ill humor. But and because, one hasn't asked or may not ever ask, being, as I have been told, a pugnacious party not entirely displeased with his slant on things, I indite—bile. Bile, sometimes misnamed spleen, great, torvovous, God-given bile!—to thee are indebted all of the do-fellows, the go-boys of the world.

It was thou who informed Archimedes, Cicero, Plato, Cato, Galileo, Erasmus, Pascal, Charlemagne, Descartes and Machiavelli. It was thou who put the punch in Elizabeth, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Ben Disraeli. It was thou who pushed the pen of Homer, Dante, Milton, Cervantes, Dean Swift, the Jo(h)nsons, Ben and Sam, A. Pope, and T. Carlyle. It was thou who wielded the mallet and chisel of Praxiteles and Phidias; the brush of Leonardo and Michelangelo; the burin of Blake and Hogarth; the sceptre of the Caesars. It was thou who embroidered the buckram of de Pompadour and Brummel. It is thou who make Popes, politicians, soldiers, statesmen, fops and financiers. It is thou who gird the athlete, preen the mummer, sting the poet, fire the lover,

gut the god. It is thou, by Zeus! who spin the very thread of life. Great bile!

This rhapsodical, or should I say? Boeotian period, though perhaps in your mind the jargon of a jackass, is not without meat to those who prefer their steak rather raw than well-done. Seriously, for by course the subject has a serious turn, my emotions attained this unnecessarily shrill pitch because of the increasingly distressing quantity of Polyanna propaganda which is being imposed upon a gullible public. Everywhere one goes one is confronted by the gargoyles of the grin-gospel. The daily papers, periodicals, street signs, shop windows, business offices, shine parlors, cigar stores, private homes—no place seems immune. Just yesterday while purchasing my daily dose of nicotine, my eye was brought down and my spleen up by this inspiring maxim; couched in wide red letters under the glass of the show case: "SMILE IT'S WORTH A MILLION DOLLARS AND IT DOESN'T COST A CENT." Did I smile, ask me?

Well, what's the trouble with us? What's the old world coming to? Where is our gall; where are our guts, our livers? Take Bunyan's tip: give over the grin for a day. Scowl at your man and see him cringe. Do you want something? Go out and get it. But don't go out and grin to get it. Go out, scowl, and demand it. If you don't get what you went for it isn't because you neglected to smirk at your man, it's simply because you lack bile. Junk Edgar A. Guest, Gene Stratton-Porter, and the Saccharine sisters. Take yourself over to the second-hand book dealers and purloin a copy of Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy" by way of antidote. Sounds

like sales stuff from old man Schopenhauer.

Hell, fellow, this smile stuff's the bunk! Scowl at 'em, growl at 'em! Things have got to a sorry pass, when I am informed by no less an authority than Mr. Carter himself, that his famous liver pills are, at present, in as much demand as a post-bellum pfennig among Wall Street tippybobs. But the upshot of it is that bile, great, torvoused god-given bile, seems gradually to have oozed out of us until most of us are becoming mere spineless, spleenless, smirking witlings. Laugh, guffaw, hoot, howl, bellow, pule, shout, shriek, grunt, but for the love of Mike and Minnie, leave off grinning!

## WE VIEW WITH ALARM

"But after all it ain't you and it ain't me, and it ain't him and it ain't her. It's what you might call the fortunes of matterimony, for there ain't no other word for it."—Way of All Flesh.

APPARENTLY the only important contribution of the war to the progress of humanity—if we believe its termination to be the most important—is the rich opportunity it afforded to study love-letters. Before the war, love-letters were jewels, clandestinely but with dignity bestowed, to hide, to treasure. Those of us, still young and appreciative, who found in love-letters the most authentic conscious literary expression of the general, the sole art of the humble, the presentation of the facts of life seen through the prism of an emotion, knew only our own, and were fearful of viewing them impersonally for the profane purposes



of research. Consequently, we suspected no decadence in this formerly universal art. But the war shattered this illusion as it has shattered many others. Out of the war grew an unusual intimacy between men which could lead only, and did, to a callous indifference to the privacy of the *billet doux*. Love letters, opened, tossed-away and neglected, were as numerous in the camps of America and Europe as the sands of Time on the shores of Eternity—at least, approximately. Today, thanks to the war, we recognize, with something of pain, the deterioration of the love-letter. And those of us—editors, journalists, U. S. senators—who have our fingers on the very pulse of life, are convinced that what this country needs is not so much a good five-cent cigar, disarmament, open covenants openly arrived at, as a substantial, meat-and-potato love-letter, wrought in the stress of the noblest passion, crystal-tight in perhaps humble, but, nonetheless, vital phrases.

We seem to be conscious now that the art lies dead within us. One day, in a southern camp, I picked up six sheets of writing paper from a deserted table in a mess-shack, each of the sheets partly used. Over to the extreme right, on the first line of each sheet, was: "April 6"; starting at the left of the next line: "My own dearest little Eunice." Six times tried. To my unfamiliar eye the six different attempts differed not one iota, but to the discerning eye of the moribund artist which could catch the minutest shades of love in curve of pen-line, the difference shrieked.

I would like to have seen the seventh and, I hope, last attempt. Was it perfection of all that is beauty and love in

flourish of pen? I think not. I think the writer made no seventh attempt. He gave up in ignominious failure, in disgust and shame because the willing spirit had dreamed some exquisite line or word or accent the weak flesh couldn't express. The tragedy of it! The artist with an emotion he can't for the life of him picture.

Miserably modern love-letters! With the possible exception of mine own. Twenty "dears" to the page and as many "sweethearts." While commonplaces flow from the prolific pen, love's sudden surges, at intervals, record themselves in what—? An abrupt "dear" squeezed in where it oughtn't be, or a bashful "sweetheart." Essence of love, hide your tear-dimmed eyes! Too reminiscent are your letters of the erotic passages of popular novels and songs—cheap with the pathetic gentilities of variety-show love. "I love you more than words can tell," "I miss you—" But nevermind. You mean well, O Essence! Your phrases are not set to paper flippantly, nor indifferently, but deliberately, painfully and with tragic seriousness—blossoming out of a love as rich, say, as Mrs. Browning's.

What a waste, my countrymen! Instead of cultivating love, love-letters today threaten to kill it. Fortunately, there is a remedy. The world must be brought to its senses. Education is the crying need. More aristocracy of thought, less autocracy. Fewer best sellers, less jazz, and more burning love. Once steeped in the rich poetry of earth and the ages, we shall be reading new Sonnets of the Portuguese in every love-letter that flutters under our discriminating noses. Much of the future happiness of the world depends on it.

# Songs of Al Shaldomir

By LORD DUNSANY.

## OMAR'S SONG.

Al Shaldomir, Al Shaldomir,  
The nightingales that guard thy ways  
Cease not to give thee, after God  
And after Paradise, all praise;  
Thou art the theme of all their lays.

Al Shaldomir, Al Shaldomir,  
My heart is ringing with thee still;  
Though far away, O fairy fields,  
My soul flies low by every hill,  
And misses not one daffodil.

Al Shaldomir, Al Shaldomir,  
O mother of my roving dreams,  
Blue is the night above thy spires  
And, blue by myriads of streams,  
Paradise through thy gateway gleams.

## AN INTERRUPTED SONG OF THE IRIS MARSHES.

When morn is bright on the mountains olden  
Till dawn is lost in the blaze of day,  
When morn is bright and the marshes golden  
Where shall the lost lights fade away?  
And where my love shall we dream today?

Dawn is fled to the marshy hollows,  
Where ghosts of stars in the dimness stray,  
And the water is streaked with the flash of swallows  
And all through summer the iris sway.  
But where, my love, shall we dream today?

When night is black on the iris marshes. . . .

# The Man Who Was Lonely

By HENRY BELLAMANN.

SAMUEL WHITHORNE adjusted a cigaret in a long, ivory holder, lighted it and passed out through the revolving doors of the Hotel Anscomb. Stopping in the shelter of one of the great red granite columns, he surveyed the rapidly increasing crowd that passed. It was near the theatre hour and the well-dressed throng moved briskly in the sharp November air. He consulted a square platinum watch several times and looked impatiently up and down the street as though waiting for some one.

Suddenly he seemed to remember something and re-entered the lobby. At the desk he said,

"If I am called by 'phone within the next hour, will you please say I shall return by eleven?"

"Certainly, Mr. Whithorne. Eleven o'clock, thank you."

Again he made his way to the street, consulted his watch and waited with evidently growing concern, then abruptly summoned a taxi and gave the name of a theatre several blocks distant.

A strong expression of distaste settled on his face as the taxi moved away. He relaxed rather wearily, as if he had been under a strain and stared morosely out of the window. He had not wanted a taxi; he had not wanted to go to the theatre; in fact, he had not planned his evening at all, nor was he at all certain how he would yet spend it. His conduct of the last few minutes had proceeded, he knew, almost without his

volition. Every action had been performed as though someone had been watching. He knew no one was watching. He did not have an appointment, but he had acted so because he did not know how to avoid the appearance of being a stranger in the city—and lonely. That was it. He was lonely—even lonelier than was his lifelong habit. Crowds accentuated the feeling. Everyone had business, or friends and appointments. He was alone. He knew no one.

He had come East from Maryville in the mid-western state that was his home, for no particular purpose. Several weeks earlier he had finished his last book and sent it to the publishers, who had accepted it, as they had its two predecessors, with mild and formal enthusiasm.

Today he had seen an advance notice in one of the psychological journals which read: "'Unfamiliar Psychoses,' by Samuel Whithorne, will prove to be one of the year's most valuable contributions to the study of human conduct. It is a clear and untechnical presentation of some of the most interesting conclusions of the new psychology." It was pleasant to see his name in the same column with those of the distinguished exponents of the doctrines of Freud and Jung; but he knew very well that he had not made "a valuable contribution" to the subject. He knew that his book was a very clear and thorough digest of contemporary writers on abnormal psychology and that he had made an inter-

esting and correct application of their theories to certain obscure and not very important phases of the neurotic constitution. He was equally certain that in the great flood of psychological literature constantly appearing, his work would not attract more than passing notice from the great psychiatrists, though, in all probability, it would sell in large numbers, as had his "Collected Papers on Modern Psychiatry," because of the popular style in which it was written. Whether it sold or not did not matter. It had served the purpose of occupying him for six months. His lack of clinical experience precluded the possibility of his ever writing an important psychological work. Perhaps he would not have a genuine talent for the subject—his was merely a literary talent and a literary method, he told himself contemptuously, applied to a scientific subject—a rehash—a literary exercise with scientific data not his own.

The taxi proceeded slowly. At the cross streets, the car was delayed several minutes, then it crept on again, keeping pace with the automobiles of every description that crowded close. He busied himself wondering about the occupants of the cars on either side. He wondered if they were speculating about *him*. Probably not—they were too used to crowds of people—none of them alone—they were concerned with each other—they were not lonely. There flitted through his mind sentences and paragraphs of imaginary newspaper notices about himself: "Mr. Samuel Whithorne, the distinguished psychologist, was seen at the Hotel Anscott in consultation with—" He broke off smiling with his former expression of

distaste as he recognized the familiar unconscious basis of such fantasizing.

Reaching the theatre, he entered but did not buy a ticket. Instead he took his station near the entrance and resumed his former expectant air, once more consulting his watch with an annoyed frown. Occasionally some one glanced with interest at his almost distinguished figure. He was quite perfectly dressed. Certain details of his costume indicated a careful taste. He was certainly good looking, if a little ascetic, and his strong features carried an expression of dignity and reserve. The brown eyes behind rather thick glasses seemed remote, chilling. The minifying effect of the heavy lenses gave them an expression of hard brightness that belied their actual feminine charm. Their glitter dimmed easily with emotion and assumed frequently a begging appeal. Few people ever looked long enough or closely enough at him to observe this.

"Got a seat?" asked a short, friendly-looking man in a brown derby.

Whithorne nodded slowly without speaking, wondering at the same time why he lied.

"You're lucky," continued the other easily, "she's been a big success in this play. House sold out days and days in advance. D'ye see her in—"

"Come on, papa," called a tall, elderly woman. "Mamie's here, come on."

The little man hurried away and Samuel looked after him with a warm liking, but his face showed no change of expression. Then he walked out of the theatre and along the street.

At the corner he paused before the brilliantly lighted entrance to the *Gern*



Theatre where moving pictures and vaudeville offered. Presently he was seated near the front. The "feature" was a sort of tabloid musical comedy and in spite of the protest of his tastes he found himself enjoying the performance. He particularly liked the little girl in the chorus who stood next the end. So, apparently, did a flamboyant youth sitting the next row nearer the stage. Samuel thought he saw her smile once or twice in recognition of the noisy applause from the young man, and experienced a curious feeling of envy. She had bobbed hair, rather fuzzy looking. She looked very firm and vital and, as he watched her nice round knee bending slightly outward in the sensuous movement of the little chorus step, he remembered that characters in stories take chorus girls out to supper after the show and he wondered if she would go should he send her a note. An immediate sense of the incongruity of himself with his stiff reserve and the hopping little girl on the stage, swept the notion out of his head. There would be nothing to talk about to such a girl—he would only be uncomfortable—she would doubtless be more so. Nevertheless, he strolled down the side street after coming out and was chagrined to see her leave the stage entrance hanging on the arm of the identical boy who had sat in front of him. She was talking and he was laughing with the untaught, loud laugh of his type. She was really pretty—but then, no doubt, this was a regular engagement—still, he would have liked to talk to her and experience the warm presence of so much youth and reckless vitality. Fancy flying with the idea, he imagined kissing her as he left her at her own

door—what was it like, the frank, spontaneous kiss of a girl? He had never known and his imaginings went no further.

The night was becoming decidedly colder and he wrapped his muffler higher and closer about his throat but continued to wander about the city, choosing the smaller and narrower streets. A small florist shop attracted his attention and he entered when he saw that the only occupant was a girl. He had watched her for some minutes before opening the door. She was not especially attractive, but at night some world-old instinct increased his interest in women. While pricing various things, he led her into little bits of talk on other subjects. She was polite and frank and talked readily enough. How he longed to touch upon some greater intimacy! How did others do it? He had watched them—college boys, for instance. In two minutes a prep school boy would have had her giggling and blushing deliciously. But he had not the secret. He could only be informally pleasant. Some invisible boundary stopped him as effectually as though a thick wall separated them. All of his long years of practised good manners had created habits that could not easily be broken—had, perhaps, erected barriers of inhibitions through which his rather unformed longings could not force him to pass. The ruffled and quickened stream of his consciousness was speeding dizzily as he talked, but the casual politeness of the conversation did not vary. He finally bought some flowers and, not knowing what else to do with them, ordered them sent to his room number at the Hotel Anscott.

Again he found himself wandering about the street. He penetrated less reputable sections. Away from the more elaborate conventions built by better circumstances, there must be greater laxity of manners—of morals, too, something whispered—not that—he did not know what he wanted or what he might do should opportunity offer.

The farther he felt himself from his accustomed circumstances, the greater the sense of daring possessed him. He smiled at a shabby girl of sixteen or seventeen who passed him under a light. She smiled so easily the unsuspecting and impersonal smile that youth gives to greater age that he felt suddenly rebuffed and turned again toward his hotel. The sidelong glance of a woman in a heavily plumed hat received no response and in a little while, he re-entered with some sensation of relief, the hotel lobby.

But the spirit of the evening was not entirely quelled. Trained in years of introspection he asked scornfully of himself if this was but the small town man adventuring in a city—adventuring with no knowledge of the regions of adventure and without the easy masculine assurance and "brass" of those he both admired and despised. What he really asked was that someone should batter through his own reserve and resistance and make friends, or take him against his will through some new experiences—experiences high or low—he did not care. He was capable at this moment of entering either into the rites of lofty friendship or into sheer debauch.

The sound of jazz from the cabaret downstairs drew him. Music which he understood so well affected him so

strangely. Capable of the spiritual experiences of a Franck Chorale, he was yet seized by the pounding rhythms of ragtime. He knew that his whole artistic fibre underwent change under the attack of reiterated rhythms; something in the dim recesses of his soul awoke from sleep and snarled. Again he thought with an almost scientific detachment of the curious lure of the common. Common music like the common prettiness of the shabby little girl acted powerfully. Perhaps the seemingly greater accessibility of commonness held for him the attractive idea of easy conquest.

The head waiter seated him not far from the little enclosure where the orchestra was stationed. Just now the pianist, advertised as a "super-jazzier," was playing a solo. Whitthorne noticed at once the harsh and unimaginative tone quality, the monotony of color, but he was reluctantly thrilled by the performer's remarkable sense of rhythm. There was the masterful sway of the senses caught by the sheer suggestiveness of rhythm—that same hypnosis he had felt sometimes under the playing of great pianists—he felt himself whirl and posture to the relentless, surging excitant of the player's will. A girl in a flame color and jet dress, daringly cut, was dancing with a very slim man, giving sudden visualizations of the music's meaning.

Suddenly, quite as if the feeling had been transferred to someone else, Whitthorne ceased to respond to the sharp, sensual urge of both music and dance. Some long established habit of observation and analysis stepped to the fore of consciousness and he became instantly

the cool-minded onlooker. Unwilling enough to give up these self-forbidden, self-seeking sensations, his restless mind resumed its weaving march, back and forth, back and forth in the steel cage of habit.

The next morning a letter from his publishers arrived, forwarded from Maryville. It was a request for some brief papers on "Unfamiliar Types of Hysteria" to be written in his usual untechnical style. There was a growing demand for psychological literature, the writer continued, and the success of Mr. Whithorne's first books pointed to him as the logical writer of such a book as the publishers now wished.

Whithorne sat looking out of the window of his room high above the streets. The city appeared and disappeared in clouds of smoke and steam. It was very beautiful in a quite modern, impressionistic way—none of the painters of great American cities had yet done them adequately—this piling up of strength, this magnificent cubistic-looking glorification of energy and hurry, of hard, practical purpose and daring dreaming. But it was to him too much a symbol of confusion. The quiet of the snowy landscape from his own wide study windows drifted across his mind. He could think there—he could obtain mental perspectives. How did people ever do it here? They were always so close to so many people and to so many disturbingly dynamic things.

He reread the letter. Distaste of the return from a fruitless trip and pleasure at the compliment of this request mingled. Why should he stay here hankering for whatever it was he hoped for? Why should he leave his study with its rows and rows of books, its

charm of seclusion, for this ugly contact with impudent bell hops?—he never knew when they should be tipped—he was always fearful of doing the wrong thing—he feared them more than anyone. Why should he wilfully abandon his own dignity in the pursuit of unworthy sensations?

At the same time there swept through his brain an almost crying memory of the bobbed hair chorus girl with the pretty round knee and the cheap little girl he had met on a side street. He wanted to lurk around the stage door and see her again. He would like to take her home with him. He could picture her on the side seat before the great fire in his work room—curled up in a corner against the heavy pillows, her silken knees carelessly uncovered. Damn it, why couldn't he do as he pleased? Why couldn't he make himself do as he wanted to? Two forces equal in strength opposed and held him inert. Nothing had ever been right. Why didn't his family send him to public school instead of fencing him off with those eternal tutors? If they had left him with no money when they died—he would have had to work—get out in the world and make friends—he would have roomed with some man his own age, learned the easy, comfortable slang of his fellows, had some friends. But no, enough money to establish still stronger barriers between him and the people of Maryville, who were impressed even in his youth with the armor of his serious manner, and who, therefore, left him alone to the ascetic life of his library. The very housekeeper had conspired to keep away from him the intrusions he would have welcomed. It was too late now. Circumstances

## THE DOUBLE DEALER

and his own habits had built a gateless wall he could not scale. He would go home and spend the winter alone—writing.

He remembered as he packed his bags a fox that he used to see in the hills when he was a small boy. It was very curiously marked and he had asked old Andrew, a hired man, about it.

"Don't you see he's marked?" asked Andrew. "Won't no other foxes run with him. He circles them hills all alone. He's a marked fox—won't no others run with him."

Samuel knew that was an out and out fiction, but somehow the bitter little

sting clung—"a marked fox, won't no others run with him." It was a surrender to a kind of fatalism.

He passed through the lobby of the hotel with the air of a man who was hurrying on affairs of desperate importance.

He stopped his taxi at an art store and entered to inquire about some prints. The clerk was just closing a portfolio of some photographs—in the nude—"Artist Studies" they were labeled.

Whithorne bought twenty of them and reentered his taxi with a curious feeling of relief—a faint glow of something like reflected happiness.

## Cold

By CALE YOUNG RICE.

Winter . . . and still winter!  
Down hill stagger the corn-stooks, heavy with ice.  
Sheep in the bottom shiver.

The abandoned barn crumbles with wind and cold.  
An elm dawns like a crone above it,  
With needle limbs that creak and clash  
In and out endlessly.  
But the rent of the sky still lets the snow in.

And my heart lets in the chill of the years . . .  
Of the years!



# Follow the Car in Front

By STEPHEN TA VAN.

**A**PPROACHING George Gregg-smith's metropolitan lair last Monday evening, with intent to negotiate a modest short-time loan, I pressed the bell-button in the vestibule five times—the known ring of a friend. The latch clacked and I climbed the three dark flights of stairs.

The door at the top of the third flight stood ajar, but there was no one in the studio, and none answered my blithe hail. Evidently Irene had flitted for the evening—though she was out of an engagement.

After a few seconds' wait I heard sounds of male life in the dressing alcove, and pushing aside a curtain, with a premonitory call, discovered the host himself entranced, open-mouthed, before the mirror.

"Go to a dentist or let the tooth alone," I said. "Watching won't help it."

"It's not a toothache," George replied, in the uniquely preoccupied manner of one who inspects a feature, "it's my eyes. I'm getting cross-eyed."

"I thought you were born that way," said I cheaply. "However—why does the condition worry you specially now?"

"It's this Sunday motoring," he said. "I tell you, you can't drive a strange car, or even your own, all day in that obsessed procession, following the car in front, without feeling your eyes converge. That's all the scenery I saw in the Berkshires yesterday from two until ten—the tail of the car in front. And

before and behind me were several hundred thousand other dubs, all doing the same thing."

"How many cars placed end to end, Cuthbert, would it take to equal the length of the post-road from New York to Boston? Is that the idea?"

"Exactly. To say nothing of the number from New York to San Francisco, and from Kennebunkport, Maine, to New Orleans. I get a little wild," he said, wiping his eyes, "at the thought of all those wheels, that enormous volume of machinery."

"Oh, how the moon shines," I hummed, "'on the old machinery'."

"Don't sing!" he shouted. "I mean, don't try to sing. Anything from you, at this moment, but an attempt at song. And particularly, no song with liquor on its breath. The family gin has given out and eke the family Bacardi, and Garfinkle the trusty bootlegger reports the market to have risen ten points on the one and eight-fifty on the other. Some high official must have been hounded to start a real raid. Apropos: have you any money?"

"Quite the reverse," I countered gracefully. "But I assume, from what you hint, that my original intent may as well be tabled in the circumstances. Where's 'Rene'?"

"Motoring with Vean Judson's gang."

"Why not you?"

"Do you think I can do it perpetually? I sicken at the very thought—taste gasoline and oil in the morning coffee."

"But Irene?"

"Mad. It's a mania with her friends, like their gang-eating, and in fact, complementary to that vice. First they take a ride for instance, and get up an appetite, then they eat. Then they ride again because they can think of nothing else to do, and get up another appetite, and eat again. It's the vicious circle, perpetual motion, action and reaction, Gog and Magog, McIntyre and Heath. I tell you, in the warm season, I have no wife, only an automaton that clambers in and out of motors."

"Don't she get bored?"

"Doesn't seem to. Too young, I guess, and naive. She's only thirty-three, and an actress. It takes the sophisticated flapper of seventeen to be *blasé*. I was joshing Margie the file-clerk—one of the harmless, leggy tribe that powders the face to resemble a marmoset's—I was joshing her about having a heeler with a car. 'Why, all my friends has cars,' she said. 'Really I wouldn't think of having a friend without at least a Cunningham. Just cars ain't no novelty to me.'"

"The gels in our office never, never walk," I said. "Yesterday the multi-grapher, a boy from the country, asked a stenog they call The Kid Herself if she liked to walk out in the Park. 'Whaddya mean, walk out in the Park,' she said. 'If I did I'd be fit to live in a tree, with the other squirrels.' She didn't get him at all."

George ignited one of his terrible popular cigarettes, a Maldorma—"You Get Up in the Night to Smoke Them."

"Few country lasses understand the use of the legs for walking, now, for that matter," he gasped between asphyxiations. "They dump the potatoes out

of the Ford and shoot into high from the barn threshold. No buggy riding in their young lives."

"Do you suppose Margie the file-clerk knows what a buggy is?" I asked, coughing.

"Open more windows if you hate the smoke. No, I don't suppose she does, except as a prop., full of grinning chorines, in the 'old-fashioned' scene of some musical comedy."

"Shades of Tess Alden!" I mused. "Twenty-five years ago, no boy was thought properly graduated from the Academy, unless he had practiced buggy-riding with Tess. It was a supplementary diploma—more important, maybe, than the one on parchment."

"And who was Tess Alden?" George asked idly. "The banker's daughter, I hazard. Or only a simple waitress in the college eating-joint?"

"The town milliner, and a highly self-respecting one. The most gorgeous brown hair and eyes in the world—in many travels I never saw their equals. She was fond of the boys, but critical of their antics. If she didn't fancy a young swain's behavior, she made him get out and walk, while she drove home alone. That was Tess, a great lay educator."

"Too severe for my blood. I used to have a girl who— But no matter about her. Ultimately she married a plumber... Riding in a buggy commended itself to me for its comfort. A horse sympathetically trained, not too active. You must have known one like that, sometime."

"My uncle had one, about the era of the 'Star' bicycle. Remember? The old high one with the little wheel in front and the pedals that you pushed

up and down instead of 'round and 'round. My uncle's horse was Kentucky-bred. He had a knocked-down hip, but he could rack so smoothly, a glass of water wouldn't spill on his back. A wise old steed. You could wrap the reins around the whip-socket and forget him."

"When I was a kid," said George with more animation, "my father had a wry-necked Hambletonian mare that we kept at Grogan's livery stable, and drove on Sunday afternoons. I used to bribe Grogan to let me take her out on the Westboro pike, where the drivers at the old Walnut City track jogged their nags. She gave some of them the surprise of their lives before they got hep to her. From the side, she looked like a milk-wagon horse, but she had quarters a yard across, and oh, boy! how she could lay belly to the ground and dig in her toes when some upstart black side-wheeler sneaked abreast. The old man claimed he didn't know how fast she could go, but I noticed she was always in practice for a brush."

"I thought you liked 'em calm and gentle."

"Oh, well—for different purposes, old thing. After all, can anything give you more of a jump than a good horse? A clean saddler is as much better for a ride than a car, as a hoss race is more fun to watch than an automobile razz."

"Around and around in a bowl, like a magnified patent puzzle," I said. "Give me Billy Kelly in a stretch run at Havre de Grace, making the wire by the length of his clever head."

"I go back to MacChesney," George said, "the season he cleaned up. I followed him from track to track and bet on all of his races. The bookies got to

hate my money. Of course I lost it all and more besides, afterward; but them was the days! them was the days! But pardon me! I was about to take me bath, and no ordinary gossip postpones that function. Amuse yourself as you please."

The while he clattered in his tub, my thoughts pursued the halcyon days of his delight—reaching much farther back, indeed; for MacChesney's triumphs were historically but semi-ancient. In that good racehorse's time, the automobile was already beginning to infest the roads, superseding and crowding out the bicycle, which had thrown the first great shadow of eclipse athwart the horse, as sun of surcease-seeking Amurrica.

In the latter Eighties (I remembered) the bicycle, as a universal instrument, had been dream-stuff. High "wheels" were toys with which boys experimented at a certain stage, as younger children had velocipedes; but one said "safety" contemptuously, and any prophet who foretold popularity for the contraption was ridiculed from his pulpit.

Followed quickly, in the Nineties, the safety bicycle's stupendous vogue. At one hundred dollars, nearly every adult of respectable income, and every gently-born hobble-de-hoy, had been forced by fashion and example to own and ride one. Strong men, weak men, spinsters and mothers of families, had passed through the throes of learning, and pedaled madly out for miles, then wearily back, of a sunny afternoon. Each neighborhood had had its club; bike trips and festivals were always in order; there had been special bike-paths and road-maps for guidance in pushing from State to State.



For several years—longer than by aftersight seemed possible—the makers and dealers had maintained the outrageous price. It had been useless for the thrifty mind to argue that to manufacture a bicycle cost but a few dollars and the rest was surplusage; the demand was held and the consumer continued to bleed into the dealer's pocket. The prophet of that time predicting a common-sense revision had been as little heeded as he who had prophesied the epidemic, a decade earlier.

Then the wind had changed again. Many persons had seemed to discover, simultaneously, that the bicycle was essentially utilitarian: a convenience for accomplishing errands. The tandem (egregious monstrosity! Memo: the popular ballad, "Daisy Bell," with its "bicycle built for two") had disappeared almost overnight. The festivals ceased, the clubs languished. The price had broken—one supposed the patents lapsed—and the earnest seeker found a useful machine purchasable for twenty dollars. But by then, comparatively few had cared. The bicycle had become, as in continental Europe, a logical means to an end. As a panacea, it had flopped and been forgotten as completely as its contemporary hallucination, the jingo-patriotism of the Spanish War.

The automobile had borne a share in reducing the bicycle-madness. But had there ever been a general suspicion—even a dawning of humorous acknowledgment—that the two obsessions were alike, the one as distorted as the other? Did it occur to any considerable number, by the light of precedent, that the car-bubble might burst? Perish the whisper of so honest an admission! The

automobile had become a fetich more extravagant, more solemnly absurd, if that were possible, than the passing "wheel."

"And the common service of both," I argued, "has been in the way of popular thought-preventives, poisons used as antidotes for disease. Binks, the surcease-seeker, drives a car as he takes a bromide, or a drink if he can get one, to soothe nerves riddled by work and worry. Clutching the steering-wheel, he cannot cerebrate, and so imagines that he rests. He gives her the gas, the engine leaps, the countryside streams past—flat or hilly, it is all one to him. His eyes are fixed like a cataleptic's, there's a drone in his ears; and beside him Mrs. Binks fights for breath and wishes she had waited until dinner for the seductive lobster Newburg. Who has not encountered, bouncing dangerously over rustic bridges, those stony-faced, astounding motor-parties, of two men and three stout women, or four stout women and one man, with overloaded stomachs betrayed by heavy, haunted eyes as they stormed past?"

The English had been described—I went on—as taking their pleasure sadly, but most Americans took theirs stupidly. They golfed, or motored, or built a house in the country, not because they had any clear idea about it, but because an attempt to foil or escape from the bitterness co-incidental to life's struggle was instinctive, and people around them were golfing, motoring and building country-houses. Such diversions, though deadly-dull in a majority of cases, were advertised by word of mouth and in the public prints, until they became nostrums.

Take the force of suggestion in the



concrete example. Let Mrs. Updike, at a Spring tea-fight, inquire of Mrs. Johns:

"Where do you expect to spend the summer?"

Mrs. Johns (doubtful of going away at all, by reason of the weakened Johns exchequer): We haven't decided. Where do you?

Mrs. Updike (smugly): Oh, Nugent's of course. We never *think* of going anywhere except to dear old Nugent's.

Thereupon the costly Nugent's would become the summer goal of Mrs. Johns, despite its inappropriateness to the situation. The same principle applied to the recommended automobile, subdivision or country-club. The victims tagged like sheep.

I remembered splitting on that subject in early boyhood, with my dear Aunt Ellen. She had wished me to attend dancing school, an institution for which I had a profound aversion.

"I don't see any sense in it, Auntie," I had protested. "It ain't natural for boys, all that prinking and stuff."

"But my dear little boy," she had explained, "you want to be like other people, don't you? You don't want to grow up to be a boor, you surely don't want to be *different*!"

Alack! that had been the good soul's pet horror: to be different. The desire to do what was right had weakened, through descending generations of her type, into an unwillingness to ponder anything unusual, lest it disclose an alarming truth. As to the dancing, specifically: her advice might have been excellent, but the fact remained that ignorance of the social dance had afforded me the opportunity to learn it, much

later, in exceedingly pleasureable conditions.

"The old impulses and civilizations among us are dead or moribund," I summed it up to my own satisfaction. "The Land of the Free has become a hodge-podge, less violent but nearly as chaotic, intellectually, as Russia. We are on our way, but know not whither we are going, and do not care, most of us, to wonder. The automobile-passion is but one manifestation of the common itch to forget, to blot out the cares of the day and worries for the morrow; so to deaden the apprehension by a rush of air that a semblance of drunkenness is achieved, a prohibition jag. There is no choice, no art, no epicureanism or other philosophy about it, merely a blind reaction to a cosmic urge.

"Yes, the old impulses are dead, and most of the old forms, skeletons. But here or there, in some protected or isolated section, you come upon a valid survival, either accidental or intelligent. In the hills there are strange primitive settlements, and more than once in the South—driving through to Florida—I entered a district of the other kind, wherein the rattling of my aggressive Ford seemed not only an anachronism but a profanation. The houses there were homes, not barracks; the land was treated as a heritage, a trust; everywhere were signs of continuity and permanence, the desire to get the best, not the most, out of life by practicing a plan. One read the character of the people from their estates and livestock, the horses and cattle, and from the fact that rabbits stopped by the fences to stare at the traveler of the early morning. The district might hunt, but not

to extermination. Doubtless the newer South is justly proud of the rapid growth of her industries. Personally, I honor the preservation from extinction of her old, graceful regime.

"Yet, I could not dwell in Warrenton, supposing the impossibility that I were admitted. Unto each man his metier and habitat, and I am, frankly, an atom of Manhattan, that majestic and ridiculous conglomeration of provincialism and sophistication, a unique oasis, at the worst, in the swirling national melange of twa-twa philistinics. I love her highways better than her byways, prefer her beauty to her decadence, but all in all I am neurotic with her, and old age, if it entrap me, will find me pirouetting madly in her purlieus, with the rest of them, for the pirouetting's sake."

The last sentences so intrigued me that I uttered them aloud, and George thrust out his head, with its seven hairs afloat.

"The hoot you say, 'pirouetting madly,'" he derided. "I think you're mad already. I'll be out soon, to hold you down."

But at that point the tenant in the front flat appeared, to inform us wearily of a call on his telephone for George. Neither of us had heard the bell.

George departed, dripping, in his bathrobe. After a considerable interval he returned in the worst of humors.

"From Irene," he snapped. "The whole gang has been pinched for breach of the peace, forty miles down the line in Connecticut. It would have been just a matter of speeding and a ticket, and come around in the morning, but Judson got ugly—this green prohigh liquor always turns him sour—and made the rural flatties sore. Now I have to jam around for bail."

I must not repeat his opinion of automobiles, delivered while he dressed. Fifteen minutes later, however, when we debouched upon an empty, echoing street, his attitude underwent a modification. Standing on the curb, he forced between his fingers a piercing whistle—a trick I have always envied him.

Two blocks away, the familiar put-put-put! broke into being. A taxi detached itself from the shadows, crossed the area of light at the corner, and in a moment drew up beside us. George gave the driver a number and tore open the door.

"They have their uses," he flung at me over his shoulder. "Drive like hell, Jack."

Getting enough to eat, and then getting rid of it, are two of the great problems of life.—*E. W. Howe.*

# Two Poems

By MAXWELL BODENHEIM.

## DRESS-MODEL.

You must bribe your equanimity  
With promises of maudlin nights.  
Your mind, in robes of dun,  
Is but the punished servant of your days.  
You emphasize your nakedness  
Within a shop, while women sit  
And look with acid satiation  
At trimly sensual gowns upon your back.  
You give them limbs upon a platter  
While they sit and shrewdly chatter.  
(This active incongruity  
Rules the purchases of men.)

Now the night is on your back.  
Does he kiss you lucidly?  
Be satisfied, for even poets  
Must often argue with the counterfeit  
Of your evening's entertainment.

## VILLAGE-CLERK.

Rabelais and Maeterlinck,  
Tired after many arguments,  
Subside upon your rosy face.  
You try the simper of a boy  
Playing with a toy violin,  
As your voice responds to women  
Purchasing sugar and salt.  
You long to escape, but cannot.  
The pensive relish of tidbits  
Has gradually mastered your life,  
And you linger at the deserted table.

Curve upon your sweetheart's shoulder:  
Look up and admire the moon.  
Even those who are bolder  
Must often sing your tune.

# A Fellside Tragedy\*

By HUBERT CRACKANTHORPE.

Hubert Crackanthorpe was one of the group of brilliant young men who made the eighteen-nineties an outstanding, renaissance period in English letters. His work appeared for the most part in the *Yellow Book*, the *Savoy*, and the *New Review*, whose numbers are today treasured memorials in collectors' libraries. His subject invariably was Life and its Tragedies, of which he was himself one; he went to his death at the age of twenty-six in the waters of the Seine. His friend, Richard Le Gallienne, wrote of him: "He was inexhaustibly interested in men and women, and the pity of their terrible destinies, and perhaps hardly another writer of his generation had so thoroughly equipped himself for his calling of novelist by so adventurous a study of human life." Four little books are all he had left us, and perhaps the best of his work is found in the first, which bears the terrible title "Wreckage." The others, chronologically, are "Sentimental Studies and A Set of Village Tales," "Vignettes," and "Last Studies," the latter a posthumous work prepared for publication by his mother, Blanche A. Crackanthorpe, through whose courtesy "A Fellside Tragedy" is here published. The little sketch we are permitted to print is not one of his best, but as an uncollected work of Hubert Crackanthorpe it seemed worthy of preservation.

—V. S.

**H**ARD by the tiny church of Mardale, at the head of Haweswater lake, stood a house—not a grey Westmorland farmhouse, flanked by long, low-roofed, rough-walled buildings, but a smart little villa, with a red-

tilled gabled roof, white stucco walls, a freshly-painted green veranda, and a microscopic lawn in front dotted with queer-shaped beds of bright flowers.

Everything was so strikingly spruce that to the stray tourist at the "Dun Bull" inn it seemed as if the house had been bodily transported from the suburbs of some city and set down in this lonely Westmorland valley. The walls were of such a dazzling whiteness that in summer, when the sun shone upon them, they could be seen by the people in the trains over the side of Shap fells, as a glistening white speck under the dark mountain side.

A little old widow lady lived there. Years ago her father had rented the Scartop farm on the other side of the lake, but she had married a commercial traveler and had gone away South. Thirty years later she had come back to Mardale—to end her days in the peaceful spot where she had spent her childhood.

The sun had just topped the hills and was beginning to clear away the blue mists that hung round the shores of the lake. It was early yet, and the village still slept. Not a sound save the crowing of a cock at intervals in a neighboring farmyard...

Suddenly, from the little white house a girl stepped into the road. At first glance there seemed nothing remarkable about her—just a common farm-girl, with a coarse, thick-set figure; but as she moved into the sunlight you might have seen that her face showed

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traces of great mental suffering. Her eyes were bloodshot, the lids red and swollen and there was a hard, set look about the mouth.

She glanced up and down the road—not leisurely as if on the lookout for a passer-by, with whom to gossip, but rapidly, almost stealthily. Having made sure that no one was in sight, she ran across the road to the church opposite and tried the door. It was locked. After a moment's irresolution she crossed the churchyard and began to hurry up the mountainside.

Jenny King was a true Westmorland lass, born and bred on the fellsides, who had never travelled farther from her native village than to Penrith on market days. Except last Whit-Monday, when she had gone on an excursion trip to Keswick with "Long Joe." "Long Joe" was her lover, a fine strapping young fellow who shepherded for the new tenant of the Scartop farm.

After Michaelmas he was to have a rise; and then they were to be married in the tiny church at the head of the lake. But on Saturday a tragedy had roused the sleepy little village to a state of intense excitement—a tragedy which had wrecked all Jenny's hopes. Joe had been helping the Scartop men to load the hay and had had words with one of them in the big thirty-acre field. Joe's temper was a quick one; words soon changed to blows, and at last in a fit of fury he picked up a pitchfork and ran his companion through the stomach.

A day and a half of hiding in the forest followed, till he had got money enough to fly the country. It was Jenny who had given him this money. She had taken it from the well in her mis-

treas' writing-table. The theft had cost her no moral struggle, for she had done it almost mechanically, in blind, dog-like fidelity to Joe, without once giving a thought to the consequences, only filled with the idea that he wanted the money and that she must get it for him.

But as soon as he was gone, hastening on his way to Liverpool, a reaction came upon her. It was terrible. First, the grief of her mistress at the disappearance of her savings cut her to the heart, as recollections of the old lady's thousand and one little acts of kindness crowded in upon her memory; then terror—vague, sickening, physical terror of the police, of the handcuffs, of the prison.

Towards evening mistrustful looks, whisperings, and at last a general shunning of her presence told her that she was suspected. Oh, the horror of the night that followed! For hours she had lain awake, motionless, staring fixedly at the wall by her bedside.

She had once seen in a shop window at Penrith a colored picture of a female convict crouching in a cell with her face buried in her hands. All through the night that picture haunted her; its crude glaring colors had appeared not once, but a hundred times, till it covered the walls of her room. Wherever she turned her eyes she was confronted with it; there was no escape. And gradually as the night wore on, the seated figure grew more and more like herself, till she could see on its forehead the bruise which she had got when she fell down Farmer Langley's dairy steps last week.

At last she fell asleep, but still the figure pursued her. The nightmare

came, and she was shivering, chained to the bare stone floor of the prison cell, doomed forever and ever...

The girl could bear it no longer. To-morrow they would come and take her, and she would become like the figure in the picture. She must fly. Where? She never once gave a thought to that. Only to escape to the fells away from the horrible convict-woman!

...On, on she climbed, now across stretches of grey shingle, which she sent clattering down the mountain side, now up to her knees in the bracken, now picking her way over a crowd of boulders huddled together in savage disorder.

...On, on she climbed, while her heart throbbed excitedly and great beads of sweat started from her forehead. At last she reached the top and threw herself gasping on the grass. There was a buzzing in her ears and a heavy thud, thud, thud against her temples. Yet this sense of physical exhaustion was a relief after the terrible mental strain of the last three days.

Then by degrees it passed. From where she lay she could just see the thatched roof of her father's cottage. There was the road along which as a little girl she had trudged to school, day after day, summer and winter; next her mind wandered to Joe—to Joe before the murder—she thought of the first time that he had kissed her, one blustering winter afternoon when she had gone to fetch the milk from the Scartop farm, of the trip to Keswick, and of the silver brooch that he had bought her there.

These recollections were not painful to Jenny. She was reviewing them calmly as if they were incidents in

another's life, when with a sharp spasm of pain came back the thought of her mistress' grief. Oh! she was sorry, bitterly sorry for her—yet there was no self-upbraiding. It was the inevitable. She had done the only thing possible. Joe had to be saved.

Was he already at Liverpool? she wondered. How long would he be on the sea? Perhaps he would go on a ship like the one in the picture hanging in the waiting-room at Penrith Station. In the picture the deck was black with passengers. Perhaps Joe was one of them. Gradually her thoughts began to wander, and then, and then she was asleep...

When she woke the sun was high in the sky. It was a minute or two before she realized how she came to be lying there on the wet grass—she shivered.

Look! Some people were crossing the road and coming towards the mountain. Perhaps it was a search party. She must be gone—farther away, where they could not find her. She dare not get up lest her figure should be seen by those below standing out against the sky-line; so she crawled away from the mountain edge; then got up and ran.

The range of mountains was so broad at this point that the summit formed a sort of table-land, several miles in width. It was a barren expanse, not a tree, not a shrub, only bushy tufts of coarse grass growing right down to the edges of the pools of brackish water, and here and there, like great flesh wounds in the earth's surface, gaping peat hags, with black, shiny, dripping sides. It was a dreary spot, even on this gorgeous summer day.

Jenny hurried on, driving before her

a little flock of black-legged mountain sheep, till she had crossed the range. The great lake of Ullswater lay at her feet, glistening like a sheet of molten silver; beyond, the bare, round backs of the lake district mountains rose, one behind the other, till they melted away to a purple haze on the horizon. She stood for a moment, gazing stupidly at the glorious scene; then she slipped down into a peat hag.

When she came to herself the white, weird light of the moon was shining and a few fleecy clouds were chasing one another lazily across the sky. From far away below came the bleating of sheep; then all was still...

Hark! What was that? A piercing whistle burst through the silence of the night. Another, then another, followed by a cry which made Jenny's blood run cold. It was her own name ringing through the night.

With the instinct of a hunted animal, she held her breath, put her fingers between her teeth to keep them from chattering, and flattened herself against the soft, clammy peat. Nearer, nearer they came. Jenny! Jenny! and the cry was re-echoed by the mountains opposite till it seemed to her fevered imagination as if the evil spirits of the mountains round were tossing her name backwards and forwards to each other in diabolical mockery. The shouts grew fainter and fainter; at length all was still again.

But now came strange, bitter regrets that they had not found her. How horrible the stillness was! She tried to call after them, but the sound of her own voice terrified her so that she gave it up in despair. The pains, too, which

she had forgotten in the moment of mortal anxiety, came back.

What was that white thing gleaming on the stones over there? Only the skeleton of a sheep, probably starved to death in the winter. Jenny shuddered and her teeth began to chatter again, furiously. Oh, anything but that! The life of a convict woman rather than such a death. She must go back and give herself up. Surely someone would have pity on her. She burst into a fit of hysterical crying. Then she struggled forward. Her strength was now almost spent. She was shivering all over, yet her head seemed on fire, and hunger—a devouring, overwhelming hunger began to gnaw her.

Still she crawled on desperately; now falling into a peat hag, now stumbling over a heap of shingle. Thus down the mountainside, while her knees knocked together at every step.

When she reached Farmer Langley's stead she had not the courage to knock for admittance; so she threw herself on a half-finished hay-rick and, covering herself over with hay, slept.

\* \* \*

Two hours later, when the sun ushered in another gorgeous June morning, Farmer Langley's men came and finished the rick...

As the days went by a strange, horrible odor came from the rick-yard. They pulled down the rick and found poor Jenny's body. The forks of the men had pierced her through and through. Was it these wounds that had killed her, or had she passed away before the rising of the sun?

Who shall tell?

# Hunger Inn

By JESSICA NELSON NORTH.

Waiter, waiter!

The hour is late.

Bring me love on a silver plate,

Topped with green from the coolest springs,

Garnished with kisses in golden rings,

Warmed with laughter and spiced with tears,

The love I've famished for all these years.

"We're just out of love, tonight, Madam."

Then hasten, hasten.

The moments pass.

Bring me fame in a tall thin glass,

Ice to clink with a tinkling sound,

Mint-leaves traveling round and round,

Frothy bubbles to break and gleam,

The heady draught of my headiest dream.

"The cellars are empty, Madam."

But, waiter, waiter,

An hour is spent!

Bring me a bowl of old content.

The good contentment we used to bake

In a round brown bowl of the earthen make,

Seasoned well with a housewife's pride,—

Crispy crust, but a soft inside,

Not so rich as a finer dish

But hot and tasty as heart could wish.

"We can't get the ingredients, Madam."

Your fare is poor and your service slow,

Hungry I came, I'll hungry go.

Perchance I can feed me further on.

Bring me my wrap and I'll be gone.

"Just as you say, Madam."



# The French Genius in Art

By MAXWELL ARMFIELD.

**A**T a time when the world is almost consciously crucifying Art, and when in America one is watching uneasily lest the new resurrection should be secretly effected within these coasts; whilst the world's vital center is once more shifting westwards, it may not be irrelevant to see just what it is that the various countries are sending as their tithe to this new birth.

It is perhaps more interesting at first to examine a little into what we call the French Genius, because France for many years has generally been held, so far as Painting and the Drama are concerned, to be the cultural center of the world; and also because the majority of American painters have put themselves to such an extent under French influence, that in American painting the aims and ideals of the Parisian atelier are reflected almost to the exclusion of any others.

Yet, for ourselves we hold that Americans remain almost untouched by the essential genius expressing itself through French art, and that the appearance of Gallicism, so blatant on the surface, is fortunately a mere trick of technique which, like all such tricks, confuses the real issue.

What then, exactly, does one mean by the French Genius?

Not, certainly, any peculiar virtuosity or even virtue inherent in France, from the attainment of which all other nations are excluded. That were a notion possible only to the narrowest

chauvinist. Rather so we take it to be an attitude towards life, and especially an artistic attitude, that has been taken consistently by generations of French people as the expression of the finest feeling of their country.

These qualities may be found elsewhere, no doubt, but we may see them here, most clearly and most consistently revealed.

Only in their material manifestation do they necessarily become national and limited in character. That is to say, the lay of the land, the climatic conditions, the flora and fauna and other consequential features of a similar character, have to some extent defined these qualities of mind, and associated themselves with them until we can scarcely separate the one from the other. *Au fond*, however, the essence of the French as of any other "genius" is a quality of mind that could and should be a part of everybody's mental make-up.

We notice that in their art-expression, all nations may be roughly divided into two great classes. Those who merely weave patterns, more or less complex: often with no particular meaning attached beyond the delight in so doing: and those who deal with facts of experience, collecting and arranging them primarily for delight, but also with the object of interrelating them, of drawing some conclusion or pointing some moral: those who put color first and those who put meaning first; those who joyfully praise the spontaneous vitality of life, and those who tend wisely to

direct and guide its impetuous current in such ways as to make the most economical (but not parsimonious) use of it. The male and female attitudes.

The perfect expression, of course, needs both elements, but this is not immediately attained. As with individuals, so with nations, the restraining and orderly quality is usually acquired as the result of experience.

Neither a child nor a child-like race has a restrained or subtle sense either of shape or color. His sense of shape and pattern is rigid and slight, perhaps, but not restrained, save as the mechanical medium he uses is restrained. His choice of hue is always as near the primaries as possible; he has, however, so true a sense of pattern-weaving that he can harmonize the most unpromising material.

To the pattern-weavers belong, then, the simple people. They may be highly civilized: certainly the Scandinavian people are among the most advanced socially, in the world; yet they are essentially a simple people still, and belong in their best expression today as well as traditionally to the weavers of pattern. When they throw this heritage away for the Parisian accent, they achieve little of real interest.

Some nations, such as the East Indian, have consistently expressed their art impulse by pattern, whilst even in their very crude beginnings others, as the Greeks, began immediately to invent and use human stories, and have not originated a single pattern worth remembering. All the Greeks' patterns as distinct of course, from compositions which are not repeating in their basis, are rather feeble memories of Eastern

motives, when they are not directly handed down from the Minoan craftsmen, and entirely spoiled in the process.

To the extent then that the French art in its best phases deals always with what is called natural representation, and is incapable even of copying a mere repeat with *esprit*, (*l'art nouveau* and the recent thieving of modern German patterns are perfectly fair examples of French pattern-making); to that extent it is classic with the classicism of Greece; but the classicism of Roman and late Greek sculpture that we see laboriously affected by such painters as Ingres and all the Academics, has no real connection with what we refer to as the French Genius.

This begins to be distinctive somewhat after the earliest Renaissance. Pater, in his curiously French style, has conveyed this early-morning of the French genius very winsomely and very truly in many of his books. Wherever he deals with the Trouveres, for instance, and in his "Imaginary Portraits" and in the "Renaissance."

This Provencal ballad of about the twelfth century, expresses exactly the same thing in its rather wistful way:



A l'entrada del tems clar, y— ya! etc.

One has only to compare this with a German or English folk-song to see already a subtlety, a determined getting-away-from-the-pattern, so far as its obvious tune is concerned; an almost atmospheric treatment that is quite individual though still colored of course by the Italian and Church influences. The note of wistfulness, which is not

entirely due to the use of the Greekcool, so clearheaded, so delicately analytic mode for it is quite different from the English sadness, remains unchanged under French art right up to Debussy and Chavannes.

In these early days, too, the Italian, French, and even Flemish craftsmen seem to have been much more *au courant* with one another's doings than at the present day, in spite of all the tediousness of their traveling; so that the exquisitely naive and simple sculpture of a French cathedral may often be seen in Italy or in some picture by Van der Weyden or Memlinc.

It is rather odd that after this very early flowering, French art has not done very much to boast of in Sculpture, in spite of all that has been done for it and said about it.

It is extremely doubtful, for instance, if Rodin's work will stand anywhere near Chavannes' or Debussy's in the respect of future generations; its comparative popularity today being a bad indication amongst others. To say that French sculpture is more alive than British sculpture is not to make any very momentous discovery or to pay any compliment.

It is in lyric poetry and above all, in music, that French genius is most evidently at home; there and in those little oil panels not larger than ten or twelve inches either way; those "pocket-pieces" in which such painters as Corot and the Barbizon painters so often surpassed themselves.

Nothing probably could more aptly indicate a certain aspect of French art and especially of French music and lyricism, than a remark of Doctor Garnett's about the French intellect:—"so

lytic of its own motives...."

It is not big in any sense, but it has a certain steel-like fineness and flexibility of temper that is essentially masculine, where too often what passes for strength and verve is mere brutality or licentiousness. It has, too, very evidently the masculine delicacy and subtle sense of nuances of meaning in which is the incisive wisdom and rapier-cunning attributed to the angel Michael. And this without a taint of hardness. For the delicacy is, after all, so very much that of a grassblade, which no one would so defame, or of the poplar leaf so easily set a-quiver by the breeze's lightest caress, that we could not think of its precision as uncomely or as lacking in feeling. There is no doubt that much of the lay of the land begins to mingle its correspondences here, and to set up an elaborate system of memories and reverberations; for one cannot think of French music without constantly hearing again the fresh ripple as a sudden gust sweeps over the river, leaving the willows whitely flaming and the poplars rustling.

There is in it, too, the splash of more sophisticated water, trained delicately to whisper into hollowed marble, whose spray is so fine that it will scarcely spoil the silken dresses it may happen to dew if the wind be fresh of an evening.

Here, too, we find a hint of that other essential of the French Genius; its southern origin; its air, to use a vulgar Anglicism, of being well-bred; of having its roots very well laid and delicately spread. And for all this, notice that in France art often chooses humble enough men for the bestowal of her



favours, whilst across the Channel, the younger sons of wealthy people as often choose art, almost as a favor, for their profession.

To return, however, to this question of waters; let us compare for a moment the case of France with that of its neighbors, and we shall see perhaps how it is that its art is so full of their voice.

Italy, one must admit, is insufficiently supplied in this regard, having indeed in some parts, quite a vulgar thirst, due no doubt to the greedy and short-sighted policy of cutting down forests indiscriminately, for firewood. One can scarcely expect, therefore, that its artists will be so free with the element. Similarly with Spain.

Again with the English; there is so obviously too much of it everywhere that any more than a passing reference would become either satirical or fraught with uncomfortable memories of all sorts.

France, however, well-watered, is quite comfortably dry for the most part, and so can realize the water-charm with an impartiality that is not possible to its neighbors.

At first this delight in water of all kinds, is scarcely conscious. We may hear it trickling and bubbling and delicately dropping through the suites of Couperin and Rameau, but it is not as definite, at any rate not as visible as in those delicious groups of courtiers assembled with their ladies about some golden fountain in some Book of Hours, or in the Romaunt of the Rose, so clearly prophetic of Watteau.

In music it remained for Debussy and for Ravel consciously to inspire themselves in rain-washed gardens, with

goldfish in fountains, and the dizzy tinkling of the sharp Spring rain-needles in their basins. . . the young lily-leaves seen faintly under water, still only half-uncurled and quite innocent as yet of the warm patter above.

And then, too, that more than half-French poem of Maeterlinck's, that dim and sequestered drama of *Pelleas and Melisande*, which in Debussy's hands becomes a little less gloomy, a little lightened with the wan sheen of moonlit waters: is this not here made into a veritable water-poem, sounding all its rhythms from the gushes of warm spring rain, almost gay, and glimmer of moony dew, to the sombre stillness of the forest well, full of silent echoes, awakened but that one time only to utter those wonderful water-sounds? This scene in itself is a poem on the sound of water: so sad, so beautiful, so irrevocably deep, and yet too rapid for thought, as the jewel slips and falls, plunging through the pale glimmer into terrible blackness; so that *Melisande's* unstified sob, liquid itself and part of the jewels and the well, hinting (in that indefinable way that may indicate in a complex and traditional art-consciousness so much more than direct utterance) of *Undine* and a dozen other stories and pictures. Does not this artistry move one more than the incident of the play could account for in itself?

In this subtle echoing and implication, French art, and especially perhaps, French music and Lyric, has much of the aroma one chiefly associates with the art of China at its best, and with little else in the world. It is a fragrance so subtle that only a highly refined and



aristocratic civilization that has neither become too complex nor soft, nor too far separated from the soil, could have produced it.

Not too far separated from the soil!

There are two facets of the French Genius that especially come to mind in connection with this phrase, taking form first in the typical farmyard lyrics of the Pleiade and of Couperin, and second, in those severe vases and pots, often festooned demurely in dull pink or lavender and with crisp or pithy mottoes, such as one may see now, alas, most easily, in museums.

The poetry of the Pleiade introduces us more directly perhaps than any other aspect of French art to that simple outdoor life of the field, farm, apiary, and herb-garden which is inseparable from the French Kultur as to be trailed even over the terrible productions of the Court at Versailles. For even though it may be under a perverse and cynical aspect, the country life is there—pathetically enough in the Petit Trianon, for instance.

It is doubtful whether to look upon these palatial farmyards as the result of perverse seeking-out of alien sensation, or a genuine longing for simplicity by victims of a boring materialism.

At any rate there remains something essentially of the country, something unutterably provincial, even about the most astounding artificialities of this epoch, and one feels sometimes, in looking at them, that the true aristocracy of France is to be found among the peasants... or perhaps, that what one admires in the aristocratic ideal are just those qualities that have least to do with ostentation or wealth-consciousness.

In the magazine *Bon Ton*, one has seen designs by M. Boutet de Monvel than which nothing could well be more typical of French art, more refined, or farther removed from the city drawing room. They are designs for the garments of women who can superintend the cuisine of a chateau that is half a farm, but also of a woman who is at ease in a salon.

It is true that generally speaking the French genius is not concerned with immense proportions, as is the Italian. It is not the function of an exquisite thing to be large, (horrible large violets!), nor of monumental work to be exquisite, (Milan Cathedral!).

It is, however, equally true that when the French genius has expressed itself largely, it has as a rule been intelligent enough to realize the foregoing truisms.

In painting, the matter is a little different. There is really very little that one would call exquisite in the bulk of French painting. Even if it be not on a large scale, one feels that these often tiny things have a largeness of manner that amounts to the same thing. There is as rarely anything dainty as exquisite.

French painters can, it is true, fail on occasion in a more extravagant way than almost any one. We have to go no farther than the Pantheon to see that; but this has nothing to do with French genius, it belongs to that counterfeit, or as Dr. Garnett puts it, "counterpoise" that "strives to lose itself and release itself in continual rhetoric and emotional positions." In spite of all this, even here we are obliged to see the workmanlike manner of its accomplishment.

When the supreme expression comes at last, as in Chavannes, there is not only no question of the general national tendency . . . as of an exquisite simplicity . . . interfering with the particular needs of the occasion, but we are assured that it will even find in the new test an avenue of escape by means of which to enlarge those very qualities themselves.

There is surely nothing more utterly French in the best sense, than the best work of Chavannes, and there is certainly nothing in French art that is so universal in feeling. It sums up in one broad survey the whole range of artistic endeavor from Egypt to Monet, and does not include one element that is out of mode as mural decoration.

The Impressionists have their little place along the banks of the Seine and Oise, where they are at home; but they would not appear of much account in Cairo or Teheran.

A Chavannes wall, however, and one may say, too, a Giotto wall, would, one feels instinctively, be as refreshing and as right in the new State buildings of Pekin, San Francisco or Stockholm.

You may say that this is entirely irrelevant, but there is no doubt that in the future it will be the test for all the biggest work and it will be the highest tribute to any nation that it has produced work of universal appeal. And this is the great reason above all for the study of French art in America, for American art must necessarily be a world art. It is the legitimate heir not only of all the ages, but of all the countries, and it is that school, "upon which all the ends of the world are come" for a great refreshing and revivification: to be made into something new and

strange in which we shall all recognize our own longings and ideals perfected and completed. In the work, then, of Chavannes, we seem to see the apotheosis of all that is implied by the French Genius; even its exquisiteness on suitable occasions. In that virginal figure of "Hope," for instance, seated with the lightness of a flower petal and the precision of a goddess in some Attic relief, her wide eyes gazing forward for ever in complete trust and expectancy of good, the delicate echoing of the rhythm in field and distant village implying with the hint of evening bells, the more haunting and melancholy entanglements from which, those wide eyes know quite well, she will at some time escape.

Debussy uses his faint and atmospheric color with a similar precision and with a like breadth, though perhaps on a smaller scale. Quite analagous though different enough in subject matter, is the song, "*Les Cloches*." The hues, as always in the best French art, are very severe, very delicate and strange, murmuring of willows and of sandy shallows strewn with their yellow leaves. Its tonality tends to be faint and monotonous, avoiding the crude changes of violent notes that mar so much that is well-intentioned in recent American art. It harks back to the scale of sage green, lilac, and all manner of buffs and biscuit colors; of tones of rusty rose with intenser hue in the blues always; the quiet and aristocratic hues that can be the most intense without being too importunate. And over all these and through them, showers of pale gold or golden interstices as of a shaded trellis with a misty sunset seen between the vines. All as far removed

from the average French atelier as Luynes and Tarascon are from Paris.

The Parisian accent of Benjamin Constant and J. P. Laurens has as little to do with the true French genius as the *petit diners* of the Parisian demimonde have to do with du Bellay's evening omelette flavored with chopped chervil or summer savory out of the fragrant herb-patch over the wall.

You cannot appreciate French art in Paris alone, though you may get a certain sense of its workmanship there. Foreign students are beginning to see this and are migrating more and more to Fontainebleau, Pont Aven, Brittany or Provence.

For just as there is nothing more universal and sane than French art at its best, there is nothing also more local and petty than the Salon at its average. Hitherto it is this superficial trick of style, fostered by the Academics, that has been very largely acquired by the visitors who have not taken the trouble to go more deeply into fundamentals; but already the reaction has begun, and the deeper he goes, the more clearly does the student see that all art is one in aim if diverse in achievement; and that nationality in art is one of those illusions that need hinder us no longer from that broad view which embraces the whole world's beauty in its gaze.

## Preference

By VIVIAN YEISER LARAMORE.

I have loved quiet places  
And patches of blue sky  
Better than the faces  
Of people passing by;

I have found night and morning,  
With little noons between,  
Fairer than adorning  
Of any earth-born queen,

And rivers that are taking  
Their tired hearts to the sea  
I'll never be forsaking  
For human company.

# Precursors

By HENRY McCULLOUGH.

**T**ILL the full moon we plowed the  
whale's path; sang Skald the  
Singer.

*Till the full moon the sea-swans  
breasted the wave-lash.*

*Then came we to a broad river;  
Our oars bent like bow-shafts.*

"Oh aye, t'was back-breaking work.  
The current was hard," grumbled Othlin the Weasel-eyed.

*Then came we to the grey-walled  
town;*

*There was much blood running.*

"There I broke my strong ax," bel-  
lows Sigurth the Braggart, "against  
their spiked gates, while they poured  
boiling oil upon us from the turrets.  
Those Frenchmen who will not come  
out and fight like men!" He tipped  
back his head and drank long from his  
ox-horn and red wine; an ox-horn pol-  
ished and gold trimmed and supported  
by two golden frogs. From the head  
of the table Erdswulf the Raven  
watched him with black eyes.

Round the table walked Clotilde, the  
daughter of Erdswulf, for whom the  
Braggart had gone on the sea-faring.  
She filled the wine horns of the warri-  
ors. As she poured the wine she  
laughed at the jests of the home-comers  
and tossed back her long braids. She  
filled her father's cup—that was the  
skull of his enemy Hackmer. She  
brought wine to Othlin the Weasel-eyed  
and to Burgard the Thief, and to the  
others until she came to the foot of  
the great table where the prisoner sat—  
the Frenchman, whom they had placed

there as a jest. He was as tall as any  
of them and dressed in black gar-  
ments. She stared at him curiously. He  
looked at her and smiled a little; there  
was no fear in his eyes. His wine-cup  
was full.

*In the open space we fought merrily.  
There we heaped the dead men.*

*Our swords flashed like sunbeams.*

"The braggart fought well there,"  
said Burgard the Thief, who wore his  
hair loose because his ears had been cut  
off, "until we others came at them  
from the side, slyly, and many of them  
died."

"Aye, I fought well," cried the Brag-  
gart, and scratched among the hairs on  
his great chest. "I killed ten men. My  
sword went through their armor as  
through a full wine-skin. I chopped  
them down."

*There was much booty of gold and  
silver;*

*Fine clothes we heaped in the market-  
place;*

*White cloths were stained with the  
wine that we drank.*

*There was fire and smoke and the  
screams of women.*

Their shouts made the great hall  
quiver. The Braggart tore great hand-  
ful of meat from the roast and cram-  
med them into his mouth. Erdswulf,  
the Raven, cracked the bones with his  
teeth to suck the marrow. At the foot  
of the table the Frenchman ate quietly  
and smiled at the Norsemen. He  
poured water in his wine. Clotilde  
stood by the Braggart's chair and lis-



tened to his talk. Under the table the dogs quarreled among the rushes.

"When there was none to stop us, we plundered the town. Those Frenchmen had riches, gold and silver and in their churches were glorious flagons and strange cross things with pretty stones in them. We took what we wanted and the rest we left out of charity—our galleys were small." Clotilde laughed merrily and clapped her hands.

"And what of him?" she cried, pointing to the prisoner. "Did he fight well?"

"Fight? He did not fight at all—"

"And you say he is a great man in his land?"

"Aye. He is the leader of them all, a baron. They ought to pay well to get him back. And I could break their Baron with my two hands."

The wine was affecting the Braggart. He stretched out his great, hairy arms and flexed the muscles of them. Clotilde stroked them admiringly. The Braggart was a monstrous man, second only in size to Erdsulf the Raven, who glowered from his high place at the head of the table.

"We took him without a blow. They told us that their leader was in the castle and we went there. There was none to admit us so we went in. We went up a long staircase in a turret with our swords in our hands, for we expected every minute to find him on those curved stairs. It would have been an awkward place to fight. Up and around we went till we come to the round room where he sat—reading in a book. Him the Baron of them! Dressed in black! He was surprised at our coming."

"He is a woman," said the Raven as he drank from the skull of his enemy Hackmer.

"They told us that he had been a great fighter."

"And he is young yet—" said Clotilde.

"Aye, but now he does not fight; he reads books. So I broke his head." Clotilde looked at the Frenchman and for the first time noticed that he wore around his neck a string of black beads and from the end of it hung a black cross. From time to time the stranger's long fingers crept to this rosary. His hands were very white.

*Let the wine flow as flowed the blood of our enemies.*

*Free is the life of the sea-rover;*

*Riches he brings to the kings-hall.*

The harp sang with a mighty discord. The table shook from the blows of heavy fists. Upon it were broken pieces of bread and torn meat: wine dripped upon the rushes. Othlin the Weasel-eyed slipped from his bench and fell among the dogs. The Braggart rose to his feet: he staggered in his walk.

"Aye, thou'rt a woman," he cried and jerked the Frenchman to his feet. The prisoner smiled.

"Thy blood is like water—bilgewater. We took thy strong town while thou wast reading a book." He spat in the lean man's face. The Frenchman went very white; his eyes flamed with anger. His hands crept to the black beads upon his breast; his lips moved. He stood quite straight without flinching.

Clotilde stared at the two and marveled. The Frenchman stood with spit upon his face—and yet he was not

afraid. Erdswulf the Raven sat at the head of the table with his chin in his hands.

"Thou goest too far, Sigurth. He has eaten our meat."

"It is not seemly for women to eat with the warriors," snarled the Braggart. "Go to thy place, woman." He struck the prisoner with his open palm, a mighty blow. The lean man fell among the wargear along the wall. Clotilde watched him as he drew himself up to his knees, his hand upon the rosary. Slowly she stole to his side till she saw

his eyes; they were shining with happiness. She bent over to look into his face. He smiled to her; his fingers slipped along the beads, his lips moved.

*Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.*

Clotilde walked to the side of her father's chair, her head bowed, thinking.

"Father, I would make the next seafaring to the land of the French."

Erdswulf sat with his chin on his clenched hands. After a time he bowed his head.

## At Asahi

By BABETTE DEUTSCH.

We lingered in the dingy, deserted room;  
Twin threads of smoke  
In dim blue aspiration rose and broke  
And mingled from our casual cigarettes;  
As tho our souls should float from us and touch  
In that light-filtered gloom.

We were remote  
From unrelenting time, and from the threats  
Of the traffic-ridden city, and from the pain  
Of restless argument,  
From life that is so violent and vain,  
And death's uncertainty.

We watched the garden, pale as glass  
In orient serenity,  
While twilight dwindled and was spent.  
Till past the sill the soundless hour moved  
And cloaked us in compassionate consent.

# Fyodor Dostoyevsky

By N. BRYLLION FAGIN.

GENERALLY, the number of men born with new ideas, or even capable of giving utterance to anything out of the ordinary course, is infinitesimal," says the student Raskolnikoff in that penetrating masterpiece of Dostoyevsky, "Crime and Punishment." And generally, one might add, the number of men capable of understanding this infinitesimal number of men with new ideas is almost just as infinitesimal. It has taken more than a half-century for the most intellectual portion of the world to appreciate the message of the hectic genius who penned Raskolnikoff's statement. The man lived and died in sorrow and poverty, with his moments of local triumph and years of suffering, and only now, forty years after his death, his soul, through the voluminous pages of his works, marches through the world with a majesty and a reverence which immortality alone can inspire.

To the year 1821 the novel owes the birth of two of its greatest geniuses. Gustave Flaubert and Fyodor Dostoyevsky have done more for the evolution of the modern novel than most literary historians have so far credited them with. Indeed, the similarity in the destinies of both is so striking in some respects as to seem almost fatalistic. Born in the same year each lived to open new vistas of literary creation, to suffer of epilepsy, and to die about the same time—Flaubert in 1880 and Dostoyevsky in 1881. But this is where the

similarity ends. The Frenchman never did feel the whip of poverty; his temperament was peaceful and elegant; his pessimism, intellectual; his message, a detached naturalism, precise and refined; while the unfortunate Russian was bruised by all the buffets that life at its cruelest and vilest is capable of—starvation, imprisonment, exile, even the threat of summary extinction, and the heritage of criminal propensities and disease—and yet through all this he came out, as if through a purgatory, cleansed and ecstatic. His work bears the impress of violent emotions, of sublime fits of penetration and revelation, of inspired clairvoyance.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky was born October 30, 1821, in Moscow, in a hospital for the poor. His father, a military surgeon, was a drunkard and a tyrant, who finally met his end at the hands of some peasants who smothered him with carriage cushions. His elder brother, Michail, died of an unspeakable disease. His younger brother, Nikolai, was a drunkard. His sister Barbara accumulated a great deal of wealth, and was murdered because of her miserliness.

Such was Dostoyevsky's stock! And no one knew better its degeneracy and the yearning of puny souls striving futilely to break through it, to reach the rays of the healing sun, than Dostoyevsky himself. His colossal "Brothers Karamazoff" testifies to this supreme knowledge of his. His whole family is there, pitilessly rendered in his charac-

teristic style, with a passion and a fury, a contempt and a compassion of which he alone of all the masters in universal literature was capable. There is the father, a veritable incarnation of sensuality; the son Dmitri, with all his libertine instincts and impulses and great tenderness of heart; there is the other son, Ivan, sullen and Hamletish, a puzzle to himself and to others, a combination of "Faust and Don Juan in one person," as Professor Mazaryk calls him; and there is the youngest son, Alyosha, directing his eyes to saintliness, animated by a ravishing desire to salvage the wounds of existence, and all the time in panic at the vague rumblings in his blood...

His own life was a series of misfortunes and contradictions. He married a woman of whose faithlessness he had positive proof. Then there was a German fraulein who deserted him for a Frenchman. When his wife died he married again, a little girl half his age. He wrote in the most outspoken way of prostitution and unbridled life generally, believing that the victims of carnal impulses and a callous criminal society cried aloud to a dozing God, and that every recess in the human soul and in the cesspool of existence was a theme for the artist, yet he forbade his youthful wife to read erotic novels. He spent four years of Siberian exile, was once even condemned to death, for socialist activities, yet he died a confirmed reactionary. He idealized the despised and the insulted of the earth, the ragged and the dirty, yet he himself affected the manners of the exalted, dressed himself painstakingly and scented his hair with cologne. He died in abject poverty

and was followed to his grave by forty thousand mourners.

And now the literary world is celebrating the close of the centenary of the birth of this paradox of a man. For the world has inherited out of his contradictions and his foibles, his weaknesses and his fortuitous persecutions the wealth of his visions. Fyodor Dostoyevsky is the one great novelist who has been able to strike off fiery lyrics out of the agonized chaos of existence. The riddle of life—with which all genuine literature, and Russian literature especially, is saturated—has through his pen become transmuted and ennobled. Dostoyevsky has gone down to the darkest places, into the obscurest nooks of mind and matter, of impulse and urge, of vice and sublimity, and out of it all he has woven a passionate symphony, hard and irregular, rising to heights of intense terror and tenderness. Dostoyevsky is often crude, melodramatic, lurid, but never cold, and always the supreme psychologist, the prober of the obscure, the impassioned analyst of revolting forces that "normal" people are pleased to call "pathological."

Strange that the great contribution of this morbid vivisectionist of human souls, of this wallower in the muck of the world, in prisons and brothels and slums, should be a frenzied tenderness. Strange to normal denizens of the globe, possessed of fine aesthetic sensibilities and sound theories of art and life! Even the melancholy Turgenev was highly outraged by the work of his epileptic contemporary. "What a sour smell!" he is said to have exclaimed, "What a vile hospital odor! What idle scandal! What a psychological mole-hole!" But



it remained for this psychological mole to love humanity with a Christ-like ecstasy. Who that has read "Crime and Punishment" can forget the dramatic prostration of Raskolnikoff at the feet of the little prostitute and his cry: "I do not bow to you personally, but to suffering humanity in your person?" Sonia, the personification of a degraded, prostituted humanity, whose hand no respectable woman marrying for money or a home would deign to take, is pure at heart and innocent of soul as a frail infant just expelled from the womb of time.

Dostoyevsky could love with a holy fervor because he could suffer. "Suffering is part and parcel of extensive intelligence and a feeling heart," says the same Raskolnikoff. Suffering brutalizes, but it also makes men gentle, keen, forgiving. The welling sympathy for the oppressed and disinherited of the earth that Dostoyevsky felt did not spring from mere good-nature. He was spawned in the dirt; he lived with his "Poor People" and "The Obsessed" and "Netotchka Nezvanova," he came up from the "Underground" and "The Dead House," and he knew as no one else that the spirit of man is nowhere as virile as in the misery and the dirt, seeking its God, helplessly stretching itself toward the light. Among the sick and tortured, the harlots and the murderers and the drunkards he found truth, love and brotherhood. Their suffering lifted them above the pretensions

and the simulations, the pettinesses and snobberies of the balanced and happy. They debauch and they drink, but they know their unworthiness. They are humble before their God and their conscience. And in this humbleness lies their redemption.

"Do you think, publican," says the drunkard Marmeladoff, "that your half-bottle has given me any pleasure? It was sadness, sadness and tears, that I sought and tasted at the bottom of this flagon; but He who has had pity on all men and sees all hearts, will have pity on us. . . . At the last day He will come and ask, 'Where is the girl who had compassion on her earthly father, and did not turn away in disgust from the habitual drunkard? Where is the girl who sacrificed herself to an unkind consumptive stepmother, and children who were not her own flesh and blood? . . . Draw nigh,' He will say to us, 'draw nigh, ye drunkards, ye cowards, ye dissolute men.' And we shall draw nigh without trembling. And then He will say unto us: 'Ye are sots! Ye bear the mark of the beast on your foreheads, yet ye come unto me.' And the wise and intelligent will say: 'Lord, wherefore dost thou receive these?' And He will answer: 'I receive them, O ye wise and intelligent men, because not one of them thought himself worthy this favor.' . . . ("Crime and Punishment").

Dostoyevsky is not pleasant reading. His novels have little polish. They are morbid and harrowing. There is blood in them, and tears, and a hurricane of emotions. Only the coarse and the brave who are not afraid to soil their fine clothes can go down with him into the bowels of life and come up hale and refreshed, with music in their hearts and a vision much enlarged. For Dostoyevsky's pen was clumsy and grim and nude—like Life itself—like the soul of his own sublime "Idiot"!

# Alvisi Contarini

By ARTHUR SYMONS.

Alvisi Contarini slaying Christ  
Swore in his beard: "I am a melon sliced."  
Venice his vision seized. A shadow fell  
As if from the up-hoisted abyss of hell  
On the dead waters of the dead lagoon.  
A lighted lantern covered up the Moon,  
And round the lantern in a circle spun  
The idlest wheels that ever turned the sun.  
Beside Alvisi's side a woman stood,  
Masked, and her cloak seemed dabbled as with blood,  
And in her eyes an Oriental heat;  
Hardly she stopped the dancing of her feet;  
But when she laid her hand on him he turned  
As if the sword within his scabbard burned.  
On his left side a dainty minion stept,  
A man's woman, a thing such always kept—  
A thing I say and nothing but a thing—  
For revels, when not closeted with the king.  
He was love's own choice, with his painted skin  
And subtle lips that sucked some secret in  
And in the burning pallor of his cheeks  
Trembled each ardent nerve that ever seeks  
For what it longs for, what it never finds.  
Two spirits these, imaginative minds  
That change imaginations: she, Sin's bride,  
And she the Spirit of the stagnant tide  
The wild winds stir in Venice. Waves her fan  
The masked girl and the man—I mean the man—  
Needs never a choice. Each takes his arm; one goes  
This way or that, knowing that if dawn rose  
One of the three, before dawn leaves her bed,  
By Christ's or Satan's mercy, must be dead.

# New York Letter

By JOHN V. A. WEAVER.

THE autumn season in The Big Town, as Ring Lardner satirically insists on calling it, started with a rush.

"Erik Dorn" opened the hullabalooing. That "narsty-beautiful" piece of determined pessimism—"like fireworks in a latrine," one of my critical friends described it—put on the tongue of all followers of the printed word the question: "Say, who thell is this Ben Hecht, anyway?" It was very gratifying for me to be able to answer: "Well, he's a brilliant human-interest writer of the *Chicago Daily News*—I've known him for five years—he's twenty-eight, flip-plant, sardonic, has written plays, stories for *Smart Set* and *Little Review*; went to Berlin immediately after the armistice; plays the violin extraordinarily; puts out a story a day for the *Daily News*; has at least one more novel ready to shoot when the shooting is good (the name is 'Gargoyle,' and it will be, I understand, even 'wilder' than 'Erik Dorn'), and swears he never, never will 'compromise with the public taste.'" "Dorn" set the Village absolutely crazy, and went big elsewhere, but seems to have slowed down.

Then, of course, along came "Three Soldiers," which gave the public the opportunity to see what it truly means to be "in the army now," and "not behind the plow." It also offered the opportunity to Coningsby Dawson, the w. k. war-praiser, to reveal himself as a person of considerably more earnestness than judgment. His bombastic flaying

of "Three Soldiers" gave exactly the requisite impetus to sales and controversy. For several weeks the fur flew in all directions. Leader of the denunciators was the revered *Times*, which went so far as to say, in editorials, that only four kinds of persons would like Dos Passos' book: Pacifists, disgruntled soldiers, pro-Germans, and (this is the joke) "readers indifferent to what is written, so long as it is well written." This last class receives the same condemnation from the *Times* as the other three. Isn't it wonderful? You didn't know such exquisite dumbbells still existed, did you? Well, the book started off immediately on a hot-cake sale; it has not slowed down appreciably; the controversy has quieted, but for some weeks one found excited groups of intelligentsia and human beings alike quarreling violently over whether the pussy-footers and flag-wavers should be boiled in their own lard or shoveled down the oubliette.

Meanwhile, guffaws loud or tempered were greeting a piece of burlesque which was great or not too good, depending upon whether you took the South Seas *cum grano salis*, or hard and seriously. The ringleaders of the Coffee House group, headed by the veteran humorist, George Chappell, had just perpetrated "The Cruise of the Kawa." This take-off (if you have seen the pictures—!) poked fun and other things at Tahitian splendors. Heywood Broun, Charles Hanson Towne, Frank Crowninshield, the urbane *Van-*

ity Fair editor; George Putnam, Margaret Severn, the dancer, and others interesting and decorative had gone to the beach near Rye, N. Y., attired in trick costumes, some of which resembled scanty advertisements of shredded wheat, and enacted Marquesan satire before the all-seeing camera of Will Beebe, the expert Jungleer. Chappell, as Walter Traprock, wrote the text. There were innumerable dinners for the intrepid captain, at which Frederick O'Brien thanked one and all for the ad, and "hoopa" was served fluently. Don Marquis conveyed challenges for a snake-race down Fifth Avenue from his client, Captain Fitzurse. Chappell has toured the surrounding country, giving lectures on South Sea habits and relaxations, penetrating even as far as Yale University. The whole affair has been jolly and enlightening.

Speaking of Broun and Marquis reminds me that "Seeing Things at Night," Broun's reprint of articles in various publications, shows just why he is the most generally popular writer in the city. His stuff may not always be strictly authoritative, but it never fails to be tremendously interesting, quaintly humorous, and gently pleasant. He has found a wider field for his activities since leaving the *Tribune* for the *World*, and is enhancing his reputation all the time. Lord, these colyumists and their peregrinations! F. P. A., so the generally accepted story has it, departs to join Broun on the *World* some time around the New Year, whereupon Marquis will abandon the *Sun* for the *Tribune*. Percy Hammond, who used to be the Mentor of Chicago theatrical criticism, is having a mean time filling Broun's shoes on the *Tri-*

bune. One hears growls. Here's hoping he gets along better, for he is a pleasant fellow, even though he does write in a style considerably similar to that of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

No sooner had the Kawa episode become customary news than the "Mirrors of Washington" caused some discomfort to Eminent Politicians, and acrimony to Edward G. Lowry, who had been painstakingly preparing exactly that sort of comment, under the title, "Washington Closeups." The "Mirrors" took all the wind out of Lowry's sales (help!), which is rather a shame, because Lowry's book is really better. Much speculation over the identity of the anonymous "Mirrors" author has resulted in no information so far.

The next event was the publication of "The Beginning of Wisdom." This Blue Side of Paradise was Stephen Vincent Benet's first venture outside of poetry. It is loosely constructed, showing the influence of Fitzgerald a bit (denied by Benet), and of Compton MacKenzie considerably. Also, of course, there is a great deal that is intrinsically the work of a scholar-lyricist. Hasty characterization, redeemed by bursts of beautiful writing. Benet shows more promise, it seems to us, than any of the younger writers, even Fitzgerald. He has just sold his second novel, a four-part serial, to *Harper's Bazar*. Watch that Magazine, by the way. Henry Blackman Sell, who led the *Chicago Daily News'* book page to the eminence on which it is being maintained by Harry Hansen, is editing it with the avowed purpose of printing the best of the younger writers.

So much for literary events, except for the passing mention of "Second



April," which placed Edna St. Vincent Millay almost beyond question or denial (at least, around these parts), as the foremost American woman poet. Incidentally, E. A. Robinson's "Collected Poems" gives one a chance to see comparatively the works of that extraordinary poet.

Leaping, as it were, to the stage, I am sure that I am making a more or less universal comment when I say that this has started out to be the worst theatrical season in many years. There have been more flops so far than Charlie Chaplin has taken in his entire life. I went to the Lambs' Club the other evening, and a well-acquainted actor pointed out twenty-five excellent actors out of jobs, and he said that the situation was only hinted at by that display.

Out of the welter of bad shows, however, a number of good plays have stood. "The Circle," that mordant high-comedy by Somerset Maugham, equipped with an all-star cast, consisting of Mrs. Leslie Carter, John Drew, Ernest Lawford and Estelle Winwood, is delighting capacity houses; at least half of which sport hard-boiled shirts. Even the "proletariat," however, are responding to this bitter, sophisticated, amusing play. "A Bill of Divorcement," the brilliant work of the young English novelist, Clemence Dane, started slowly, but has developed into full swing. It is a serious play, and has given Allen Pollock the opportunity to show how even a shell-shocked good actor can outplay mediocre proteans in perfect physical trim. Janet Beecher does remarkably well with a most unsympathetic part, but is completely overshadowed by one Katherine Cornell, a youngster who has leaped to

recognition from comparative obscurity. The other serious play which has made a fair success is "Ambush," at the Theatre Guild. This is the tragedy of a Jersey clerk, a sordid affair redeemed by excellent writing very much in the Eugene O'Neill tradition, and the superlative acting which has come to be associated with Guild productions. The Guild, it seems to me, is the most worth-while theatrical organization in the country. I never expected to see anything which smacked so of a highbrow "movement" keep away from the sort of thing that the Poetry Society of America has always been—i. e., a sort of twittering, fussy bore. But the Guild goes on, giving some of the best plays with some of the best acting in the city. "Liliom" bids fair to rival "The First Year" for longevity.

Musical shows have come and gone with amazing celerity. So far "Shuffle Along" has held out since last April, and goes more strongly as the days pass. This show, as you undoubtedly know, is written by negroes and played by negroes, with wonderful flock of colored jazz-hounds interpreting a score which contains more hits than all of the other musical pieces in town put together. Add to howling comedy and rollicking music, a vim and a pep which only negroes enjoying themselves are blessed with, and you have the explanation of why a dingy little music hall on 63rd Street is jammed with society and cognoscenti as well as Broadwayers. The Greenwich Village Follies may be characterized by the phrase "prettier and dirtier," the filth of the humor does not succeed in bedimming Murray Anderson's gorgeous setting, and so that re-

vue is still prospering. Mr. Ziegfeld's Follies were apparently too diluted to stand the gaff, and departed after a brief showing. "Sally," with Marilyn Miller, Leon Errol, and Walter Catlett still sells all its good seats at Tysons, and I understand that another company, with different stars, is being organized for the sole purpose of accommodating crowds during the holiday season. An incomprehensible situation. Plays of various kinds failing all around, and two companies playing one musical show in the same city. Irving Berlin's "Music Box Revue" is still successful, despite somewhat watery material. Perhaps the explanation of these few musical successes lies in the fact that money has evidently been spent in trunk-fulls on beauty. The costumes and settings of both the successful revues are talked about more than any other feature.

Many of the failures have been due to obvious lack of merit. I wonder if there has ever been a more idiotic production than "Tarzan of the Apes." A poetic drama, "Swords," went up because the verse was doggerel and the play, too much like "The Jest," did not have a Barrymore. Clare Eames did her best to warm up her statuesque beauty. "March Hares" I really hated to see benched. There was a comedy too sophisticated for even determinedly blasé New York.

I spoke of O'Neill a paragraph or so above. I understand that "The Emperor Jones" is doing well on the road, although Baltimore, inhospitable to a colored star, greeted it with boos. His "Anna Christie," which opened only recently, apparently is going to be an-

other success. It contains much more humor than usual in one of that disillusioned young man's grim slices of reality. "The Straw," which is opening in a few days, I do not believe will be successful. I cannot see how the details of a case of tuberculosis can find response with a New York audience, no matter how poetic may be the idea involved in the characters' lives. O'Neill is, of course, generally considered the white hope of the American stage, but I do think he should keep away from the white plague.

From the stage to the menagerie is but a step, and at least three visiting lions arrived during the past month. H. G. Wells, sad to say, has remained in his secluded cage at the office of the World, and has not appeared to any extent in public. J. C. Squire and A. P. Herbert stayed for a week in the city, and created a most favorable impression. The editor of the London Mercury, antiquarian, gentle appreciator of literature, and pleasant parodist that he is has adopted the attitude best calculated to endear himself with America. He criticizes nothing violently, he over-praises nothing, he is filled with a healthy curiosity. Mr. Herbert, being younger, comes out of his shell somewhat more, and makes a jolly vis-à-vis.

The one event of the present is Bookman Week. John Farrar has revealed himself as not only an editor of considerable ability, but an excellent impressario. Down at Wanamaker's auditorium, he has adapted the Chicago Mrs. Hahner's idea to the uses of a city which apparently contains a wealth of literary persons and huge crowds of those interested in seeing what authors look like and what they have to say per-

sonally. A number of us young fellows were herded on to the platform the other day, and made, I am sure, a sorry appearance trying to defend ourselves against the somewhat condescending remarks of Henry Seidel Canby and a Professor Erskine. Donald Ogden Stewart, Stephen Vincent Benet, John Peale Bishop, Dana Burnet, Dorothy Speare, Henry Blackman Sell, and my-

self could not, I am sure, rival the suavity and fluency of the elderly academician and the cautious editor. But I do believe that we convinced the audience of one fact, namely that we are *alive*.

Mr. Farrar is doing big things for both writers and public, and I would like to see his example followed in every city of the country.

## Unquiet

By WALTER McCLELLAN.

I shall not come with windy night,  
Nor in the fall of rain  
Upon the town;  
But I will come again

At torrid noon of some white day  
When river, levee, air,  
Beneath the sun  
Lie glittering and bare.

Here I shall know sunlight on walls,  
And on magnolia trees;  
And go once more  
With Death away from these;

The hands of Death about my brow,  
Lest in my awful eyes  
His quiet dead  
Should look—and stir and rise.

## Kreymborg's Letter

Rome, Italy.

NOW that we are in Rome, one might continue the enthusiastic strain of one's letter from Como, but I realize that raptures concerning a given environment are displeasing and nauseating to those who do not share it, especially if they are several thousand miles away. As a matter of fact, one's first impression of Rome, particularly if one has the remnants of an ego left over from America, is liable to be depressing, for the great part of this city and empire with its multiform relics, historical, artistic and religious, weigh rather heavily upon the back of one who tries to feel his way forward. Outside the new symphonic movement in Italy and the sporadic appearances of art and poetry, Italian art of the present time seems to be carrying a similar burden. Coming from timorous America, one sees less occasion for American artists to be shy than for the Italians of the present era. In our case, we have no stupendous tradition and veritable superhuman exemplars thereof to bury us underneath all possible movement, however tentative. The Italian symphonic dream is all the more noteworthy under the circumstances and is deserving of the encouragement it is receiving from other countries.

One has already read in America, usually hospitable to foreign music, about Casella, Malipiero, Pizzetti, and the other representatives of the symphonic renaissance here. I had the good fortune of meeting Alfredo Casella, the mouthpiece of the movement,

just before his departure for our shores and of hearing him play privately some of his own piano compositions: a delicious series of pieces for children—only to be played by grown-ups! They are well worth the investigations of pianists who are at all fond of and not scared by modern idioms, for these pieces are distinctly an Italian variation on the mode of Debussy. They recall Debussy's "Coin des Enfants," and if anything, are even more ironical than, for example, the *Gradus ad Parnassum* of that group. Technically, they are extremely difficult of execution, but the labor devoted to these tiny pieces would be repaid. Casella is to conduct various symphony orchestras in the east and middle-west and will devote whole programs to his fellow countrymen. He will also give several piano recitals which I can vouch will reveal fresh beauty from a country which has given us an overdose of opera and of late years very little of the music for which it was at one time the inspiration of the musical world.

Our American venture, *Broom*, has been established here in offices overlooking the Pincio, an Egyptian obelisk, St. Peter's, and in the distance the everlasting Tiber. Just below us, in an old yellow house, lies the room in which John Keats died. (I do not add this simple sentence by way of drawing any symbolical comparisons!) And not far beyond, the house in which Shelley composed "Prometheus Unbound" and the "Cenci." We discovered our office before we encountered these noble relics.



Rather than commit the breach of advertising *Broom*, I prefer to refer you to its first romantic issue which went over in a recent Italian boat-load bound for New York and points north, south and west. A broom is hardly a missile for overturning and straightening out Rome, but perhaps it can do a little work back home in some of the nooks and crannies that have been overlooked or neglected by our housewives and other critics.

Keeping up with the American trend here, I have to inform you, and it gives me pleasure to do so, that we have as our associate an Italian gentleman, formerly the editor of the leading modern Italian magazine, *La Voce*, who is undertaking the publication in Italian of the books of Edgar Lee Masters, beginning with "Spoon River." "Spoon River" will find appropriate soil here because these Italians and their Rome have some experience with and understanding of graveyards and the folk who occupy them. Masters himself was here some months ago to supervise the interment. And thus the business of interpreting America on European soil, in forms more substantial than the politico-economico, progresses—and in this case, the man to be thanked is Giuseppe Prezzolini.

I have not as yet met Marinetti or his brother futurists. They are away on vacations, doubtless taking exercise preparatory to their next campaign to be unloaded upon unsuspecting Italian cities, always as oblivious of what may happen tomorrow as this eternally blue Californian sky. It is the most naive-looking eye in the world—and yet?

The high-water mark of personal en-

counters in Europe was enjoyed by your correspondent at the hospitable hands of Gordon Craig. He has been living in Italy for something like fifteen years and like so many distinguished Englishmen before him, has more or less turned his back on his own country and made his domicile here. He lives in the same small town in the Italian Riviera as Max Beerbohm, also an old inhabitant. They are, in fact, next-door neighbors. For me to recount all the small marvels of the theatre housed in that one small villa would require a few reams of paper. There has been a rumor recently that Craig would come to New York for a season of productions, but this, alas, has been unaccountably quashed. This is distinctly regrettable, more so than mere words can convey. A visit from this leading man of the theatre would greatly stimulate as well as draw together pioneer production in our country. Fortunately, there are still one or two underground channels working toward this aim and another season may have better news to report. Craig is *un grand'uomo*—utterly independent—dwelling on a visionary mountain-peak—and at the same time (if the crowd but knew!) a little more human than the average, which, after all, is what makes an artist.

His next-door neighbor was ill at the time of my visit. So my only glimpse, imaginary or otherwise, of this most exquisite of satirists was had from the street below, gazing up at a balcony from which a light shone, and by the aid of which some good person was reading aloud to the invalid. Craig warned me that Beerbohm is abnormally shy (and this is not to be wondered at)—

and that he had received a note regretting that a mood of "self-pity" made it impossible for the latter to receive company. An appended invitation to call again will doubtless put me through a second twenty-four hour journey to

Rapallo, and as the Italian railroad rates are most humane, I shall attempt it some day. Even were I to fail a second time—Craig in himself is worth breasting the Himalayas.

ALFRED KREYMBORG.

## Spirit of All Things

By OSCAR WILLIAMS

The faces on the avenue  
Are living words that flit,  
And some are keen, and some are harsh  
And some are exquisite;  
And there are wistful words, like dusk,  
And words as glad as day,—  
And yet I feel the simple thing  
You find so hard to say.

O you whose great heart is the earth,  
With clouds that move like fears,  
With hills' grey parted lips that chant  
The silence through the years,—  
How can you let these faces flit?  
How can you let it be  
And use so many words to speak  
Your heart's simplicity?

## Reviews

### THE SONG OF THE BLOOD-RED FLOWER

By JOHANNES LINNANKOSKI

(Moffat Yard Company, 1921)

**A**ND Finland speaks— To the fast increasing list of exotic fiction is added another note, that of the Finnish. This new and startling writer, Johannes Linnankoski, could create an exquisite fairy-tale, a delightful fantasy such as we should like to see come out of the North, a prose "Kalevala," say, colored with the primitive simplicity of the people of his locality. We read his novel and marvel that such a succession of happenings is put before us as anything short of a fairy-tale. But read we do, and enjoy we do, reveling in the lightsome atmosphere, for "it may be as lovely as lovely can be but nowhere does the heart throb with delight as in Finland forests in the spring, and nowhere is such music in the air." The Cuckoo said so and the hillside nodded approvingly. It is impossible to read this book and not draw comparisons with Finland's epic poem, "Kalevala." There is something of the same magic of things and words. With the Finn, words live. It is he only knows "words that I drew from the spring of knowledge which I found by the way-side, which I detached from the branches of trees." He communes with the elements—"The cold sang me songs, the rain sang me verses, the winds of heaven, the waves of the sea made me hear their poems . . . and all the songs I gathered together and rolled them in

a skin. I carried them away in my beautiful little holiday sledge. I deposited them upon the highest shelf of my treasure house." This is the fabric from which the "Kalevala" is made.

"The Song of the Blood-Red Flower" is the story of a Finnish Don Juan, the tale of one Olaf of Koskela who is intent on the discovery of love. His adventures and amours tally in color with the four seasons—spring, summer, autumn and winter. His light o' loves he names according to the circumstance of season or scenery he associates with his first meeting of her. There is Gazelle of the springtime, and many others, until finally, Kyllikki, the water sprite, who marks the approach and the arrival of winter.

The amours and adventures are as numerous as time and opportunity afford, some of them dreamed and imaginary—some of them actual. The adventures recounted are of youth that is heedless of consequence, heedful only of the joy of the moment; of youth that has not yet experienced the working out of the law of cause and effect. Each day, each moment, is enjoyed to the fullest with no qualms for what the future may bring forth and no regrets for the past. Nonchalantly the Visionary wanders from one place to another, finding delights a-plenty but with always the ineffable Something still in the distance, still to be sought after. In the daytime there was work for the lumberman, in the evening, the quest for love and adventure. The Finnish nights are quiet nights and "the moon sits listening the legends of the river and ~~gods~~

down into the water." Sometimes the stillness is broken by the song of the lumbermen—

"Let clodhoppers snore at their ease o' nights,  
But we be lumbermen bold."

Said the fuchsia to the balsamine,  
"The loveliest hour? Why now, give me the night—it is the best of all."  
And to Olaf Koskela it is the time of joy and mystery. Gazelle, Pansy, Rowan, Clematis and Daisy of the spring, summer and autumn: each is as important as Life itself for the time being, but each is as easily forgotten as she was easily loved.

But the years pass and there seems to be no lasting thing in spite of eventful days. Pleasures lightly taken lose their charm and there is little of importance to identify himself with as time goes on. He looks in the glass and discovers he is no longer a boy. "Look once more—a little closer" urges the glass. "Can't you see anything?" And he sees two dark furrows under his eyes.

"Is it possible?" he shudders.

"Is it any wonder?" says the glass coldly.

After the long, hysterical years, he returns to Koskela, to the farm from which he was turned by his father, now dead. After the death of his mother he determines to compensate for the lost years. In the forest he tries to win back the years in which he had not held an axe. As he works, happiness comes.

"Well, how does it feel?" ask the trees, as he sits down to rest.

With characteristic audacity he sud-

denly writes to Kyllikki, asking her to marry him though she has not heard from him since their parting some time before. After their marriage the calm of the average life settles down on them and a future of uninterrupted happiness seems in store for them. But the recklessness of his early life comes out of the past in the form of the once lovely Rowan and accuses and taunts him that he is contented and happy with no thought for the tragedy-of-lives that was of his making.

Circumstance permits him a glimpse after his marriage into the lives of others of the girls who had figured in his life, and for a time the past seems about to close in on him and consume him. But with Don Juanish facility he explains things satisfactorily to his conscience and manages to find fragments enough of happiness to make an existence.

The early part of this vivid book is quite nearly a poem; the atmosphere of the Finnish woodlands is languid and dream-challenging, while each ecstatic episode appears in the picture like a bright meteor, fading in a trail of cushiony words that delight the reader. The latter half seems lame and tired as one who has fatigued himself with too great enthusiasm on the first lap of his journey, but must needs persevere until a certain allotted space is covered. However—much gratitude to Johannes Linankoski for one Finnish springtime.

BEATRICE VAUGHAN DALE.



## THE DODO SAGA

DODO, DODO'S DAUGHTER, DODO  
WONDERS.

By E. F. BENSON.

(Doran, 1921.)

**M**OST people have read Dodo. If not, they seldom acknowledge the fact. They laugh or look wise and make vague, safe comments on Archbishop's sons or the great change in Mr. Benson's style, and let it go at that. For practically everyone knows enough about "Dodo" to hazard a few remarks. After thirty years some people can still speak of it with a certain scornful contempt. However, they read it—and, what is more, *they still remember it*. Not every Dodo of the minute can be Dodo for a generation. Novels of the day before yesterday are easily forgotten.

When Mr. Benson created Dodo—by the way, he did create her; the book was written, finished, before he had the pleasure of meeting Miss Margot Tennant for the first time—he did a very daring thing. For the book was an experiment, a new departure in style and treatment. And he was doubtful. But the ayes had it and "Dodo" became the rage. Whether one liked it or not, one read it. He established a precedent, and coined many quite inimitable phrases that have been duly appreciated by other writers. (Read "Dodo" again if you don't believe it.) He gave us a society novel—"a detail of the day"—in which the author stood back without comment and allowed his characters to speak for themselves. He did not egg them on, as it were, and interrupt them with sly observations and deductions of his own.

He let Dodo talk—incessantly—and when she paused to catch her breath, Edith talked. Delightful, ridiculous, lovable Edith! They are both alive, vivid, and so are most of the minor characters. But Chesterford is unconvincing at times; Jack is vague; and Prince Waldenech simply is not there at all.

Surely everyone remembers the opening scene—the announcement of Dodo's engagement and her conversation with Jack. Remembers how Dodo, fond of Jack, loving him as much as she can love anyone not herself, but greedy for position, marries his cousin. Lord Chesterford is a simple soul, dull and estimable. Dodo, of course, is neither. But she plays her part to perfection until things combine to force her hand. She finds Chesterford unutterably boring; and her baby, a comparative stranger; he is so young, dies at the height of the London season. During the three weeks of her seclusion—not her mourning—before her tempestuous reappearance in society, Jack is much in evidence. Then she has a foolish quarrel with her husband about Prince Waldenech. Finally she and Jack decide that it would be wiser to see less of one another in the future and Chesterford, a true gentleman, dies as the result of a hunting accident. But instead of marrying Jack she quarrels with him, at the last moment, about Prince Waldenech; and when he returns the next day "to make it up" he is told that—"Her Serene Highness left for Paris this morning." And that was the end of Dodo for many, many years.

Then, in the halcyon days of the Edwardian era she returned to England.

She was accompanied by a grown daughter, but minus the Prince, whom she had divorced because he proved to be rather more than less of a beast. She is the same Dodo, unchanged in spite of her troubles. Clever, kind, deliciously amusing, and with about as much capacity for real emotion as a gold-fish. Light-heartedly and joyously, she prepares to reconquer England. She succeeds, of course. No one can resist her, not even Edith. And eventually she marries Jack, as she should have done years before, and becomes Marchioness of Chesterford for the second time. In spite of Waldenech, who follows her to England, there is a triumphant wedding, with royalty present, at which Edith's music is played.

Waldenech reminds one of the Countess of Cardigan's friend—whatever his morals were, his manners were perfect. Except, that is, for his one lapse; the moment when he so far forgot himself as to indulge in a little gunplay.

This is really the story of Nadine and her friends, but Nadine's mother dominates the scene instead of remaining decorously in the background. And who can imagine Dodo in the background? The people who missed "Dodo's Daughter" missed a rare treat. It is a collection of portrait studies; some charming, some refreshingly funny, all delightful, done by the hand of a real artist. Not that Mr. Benson is always an artist, but there are certain types that he can depict with even more skill than his imitators.

And now we meet Dodo again, in the spring of 1914. She is fifty-four, has tried to wear useless horn-rimmed spectacles and be frankly middle-aged, but

it was a total failure. So she rattles merrily along, not by any means a "grizzly kitten," because for one thing, she has never annexed a boy. "And nothing makes a woman look so old as that." She has settled down, in matters of affection, to loving Jack and her young son, but she does and says as much as ever. And by the end of the war has actually discovered that the world is different—that *she is different*. In everything the war has "made the most immense difference. For instance—nowadays—we're all as poor as rats, though we trot along still. Nowadays . . . we all have parlor-maids . . . Oh, that reminds me, Jack, I interviewed a butler this morning, who I think will do. He wants about a thousand a year . . ."

Perhaps one is a snob, like Dodo, but it is nice to read about people who take the amenities of daily life for granted. Who have their meals in the dining-room as a matter of course, instead of in the kitchen. Who have long, clever conversations about nothing in particular over the tea table—and continue them while other people wash the tea things. It is restful. One realizes that it is all quite archaic, that Dodo and her friends are creatures of another age—but it is a very pleasant age.

One "gets nothing" from Dodo—except amusement—and it is not a book for those who take their fiction sadly.

Even if one does not like Dodo, herself, the book is worth reading for the sake of the German royalties, Prince and Princess "Albert Hun," who run home to Cousin Willie on the eve of war. "...I may not say goodbye. . . to anyone; you will all think that I do not know how to behave, but I know very

well how to behave; it is Albert who is so boor. I'm crying, look, I am crying, and I do not cry easily. We have said goodbye and thank you to nobody, we are going away like burglars on the tip-toe for fear of being heard, and it is all Albert's fault. In five minutes had our things to be packed, and there was Albert's portmanteau which he was so proud of for its cheapness and made in Germany, bursting and covering Piccadilly with his pants... I could have laughed at how he was served right. All Albert's pants and his new thick vests and his bed-socks being brought in by the porter and the valets and the waiters covered with the dust of Piccadilly!... Ach! Albert would turn purple with shame if he knew you had seen his pants, and yet he is not at all ashamed of running away like a burglar. That is his Cherman delicacy."

ALICE SESSUMS LEVY.

## ANDIVIUS HEDULIO

By EDWARD LUCAS WHITE.

(E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1921.)

**I**T was not until I had read, not every word but portions of every page of the five hundred and eighty-seven pages of Mr. White's book, that I came upon an "Afterword—from the Author to the Reader." This "Afterword," sufficiently curious in itself and interesting for the light it sheds retrospectively over the book, need not be quoted in its entirety:

"The phrasing of this book is mine; otherwise I am scarcely more responsible for it than would be a secretary who had written it out from dictation: I did not originate the plot; I did not, except a very few, invent the scenes, incidents, and episodes, or create the characters; I dreamed the entire story, and I do not mean had a vision of it while awake, but dreamed it while asleep."

I believe that this statement of Mr. White's is meant quite literally; and that it is an account of what actually occurred: I do not believe that it is an evasion of responsibility. Mr. White himself says that the phrasing of the book is his; and if the entire story—its plot, and, except a very few, its scenes, incidents, episodes and characters—is the record of a dream; that is no reason for supposing that Mr. White disclaims responsibility for his dream. "Tell me your dream; and I will tell you what you are"—as a psychoanalyst would say. Surely, no one but a man of Mr. White's special reading, and versed as he is in the archaeology and history of Imperial Rome, would ever have dreamt so literal a reproduction of that particular period.

Of so interesting an origin and with Rome in the time of Commodus for background, why is it that Hedulio's history of his adventures—(in his dream, Mr. White was identical with the protagonist of the story)—is not more interesting? It isn't that Hedulio's adventures are not numerous and astounding—they are! Perhaps the fault is that Hedulio himself is not more interesting.

Be that as it may, the chief interest of these "adventures of a Roman noble-

man in the days of the Empire" lies outside the story. As a reproduction of the "most wonderful society the ancient world ever saw, with all its splendors and its miseries," the book merits attention. Yet, even here, something is lacking. If there is anywhere in any of Hedulio's descriptions of physical objects and places, a mistake of fact or an inaccuracy of detail, I am unable to detect it. A casual acquaintance with the literature of the period, however, forces me to believe that Hedulio has expurgated his narrative. Chapter XIX, to cite only one example, I am sure he has expurgated in the interests of mid-Victorian prudery; or is this one of the few episodes that Mr. White himself has invented? At any rate, we should be grateful that no Christian martyrs are fed to the lions in the Coliseum.

LOUIS GILMORE.

## A CITY IN THE FOREGROUND

By GERARD HOPKINS.

(E. P. Dutton & Co.)

"A City in the Foreground" is a first novel by a young Englishman concerning the mental struggles—the growing pains of the mind—of an Oxford youth bewildered by his own thinking and by the irritating self-assurance of his classmates. Events lead to the war, and the book ends.

Did I say events? The book suffers from a dearth of events. It is episodic, but with more analysis than episode. There are no women characters of importance, there is no love motif at all; no suspense; no unravelling of plot worth a continental. The King's Eng-

lish has too much side, it is overwrought, almost denatured. Indeed, there is enough in Hopkins' novel to ruin any other book.

You are conscious of patronage toward the author. He apparently didn't take the trouble by plot to help you want to finish it. If he needed a fiver badly and you gave it to him you'd feel the same glow of generosity you do when you finish his book.

And yet the book is an entertaining one, and a valuable record of pre-war university thinking. It is illuminated to an astonishing degree by its very few, but brilliantly done, episodes. Indeed—But let me generalize.

A novel is a strange old boat, whose cargo may be anything under the sun. Hopkins' boat is packed with everything—well, nearly everything—under the sun of Hopkins' universe. And fortunately, for the literary adventurer, Hopkins' universe, pictured as it is with apparent sincerity, has, like Mark Twain's too-popular frog, the usual and many rather unusual "p'int."

SUMETT GAWN.

## A MISCELLANY OF AMERICAN POETRY.

(Harcourt, Brace & Howe.)

A FOOLISH virgin once went to a sage and asked him how she could persuade the obdurate editors to publish her poems. "There is but one way," she was told, "edit an anthology. Harriet Monroe has done it; William Stanley Braithwaite has done it; Louis Untermeyer has done it." Most especially has Mr.



Untermeyer done it. Of the approximately two hundred pages that comprise the "Miscellany of American Poetry," over fifty are devoted to the poems of Mr. Untermeyer (the editor) and Jean Starr Untermeyer (the editor's wife). There are people who admire Mr. Untermeyer, and they will undoubtedly think him justified in his egotism, but to us it seems an unwarranted self-indulgence. Particularly does it seem unnecessary to include verses such as the following:

I want a bed with room to spare,  
Where nothing breathes, and sleep is sure;  
There lust shall have a deeper sense, for there  
The worm shall be my only paramour.

It had never occurred to us that worms were conducive of lust.

Mr. Untermeyer has shown a keener discrimination in his selection of the other poems in the volume. Conrad Aiken, Robert Frost, John Gould Fletcher, Vachel Lindsay, Amy Lowell, James Oppenheim, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg and Sara Teasdale are signalled out for recognition. Vachel Lindsay makes his nearest approach to a love lyric in the lines "To a Golden Haired Girl in a Louisiana Town"

You are a sunrise,  
If a star should rise instead of the sun.  
You are a moonrise,  
If a star should come, in the place of the moon.  
You are the Spring,  
If a face should bloom

Instead of an apple bough.  
You are my love  
If your heart is as kind  
As your young eyes now.

Vachel Lindsay's poems are light, whimsical, and sometimes satirical.

Many of the poems of the *Miscellany* are new, not only in the sense that they have not previously been issued by their authors in book form, but, with the exception of seven poems, none of them has ever appeared in print. This, of course, makes the book valuable to the student and to the lover of modern poetry.

ADALINE KATZ.



## RED EARTH: POEMS OF NEW MEXICO

By ALICE CORBIN.

(*Ralph Seymour Fletcher, Chicago, 1921.*)

**D**IFFUSE are these poems, many of them, for all their brevity. One's search for the flash of thought or image caught in the crystal brilliance of a packed phrase is not generously rewarded. And yet one leaves the book, anxious to return to it again.

Mrs. Henderson apparently uses a minimum of poet-tricks to beguile her audience; her poems, her phrases, her words are not reminiscent, but seem strangely, distinctively, her own. The writer of this brief review has never lived in New Mexico. That fact, according to an ancient law of criticism, qualifies him particularly to judge whether the poet has caught the proper atmosphere of the state or not. At this time, at any rate, he will not be so heedless as to say she has. That Mrs. Hender-

son has caught *an* atmosphere, he insists—an atmosphere fascinatingly full of color: not rich, heavy color, but thinned, subdued—bleached by the desert sun a little, so to say—and the book is the more charming for it.

A precious book is a table, bearing rare foods which never, though one

dines stoutly, diminish nor cloy. One leaves Mrs. Henderson's—or Miss Corbin's, if you will—little book with much of the satisfaction of having dined unusually well; an inner peace and a lingering memory of delicate, but irresistibly gratifying, flavors.

SUMETT GAWN.



## Books Received

- AND EVEN NOW, by Max Beerbohm (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)  
 RED EARTH, by Alice Corbin (*Ralph Seymour Fletcher, Chicago*)  
 MASQUE OF MORNING, by Edward Viets (*Four Seas Co.*)  
 TALIPUT LEAVES, by J. Thurber Wing, Jr., (*Mitchell Kennerley*).  
 HER WILD OAT, by Earl M. Seel (*Dorance & Co.*)  
 THE BEGGAR'S VISION, by Brookes Moore (*Cornhill Publishing Co.*)  
 ANDIVIVUS HEDULIO, by Edward Lucas White (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)  
 EDGE OF THE JUNGLE, by William Beebe (*Henry Holt & Co.*)  
 WAMPUM AND OLD GOLD, by Hervey Allen (*Yale University Press*).  
 REVIEWS AND CRITICAL PAPERS, by Lionel Johnson (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)  
 ISOLATION PLAN, by William H. Blymyer (*Cornhill Publishing Co.*)  
 A MEDIEVAL HUN, by John L. Carleton (*Cornhill Publishing Co.*)  
 MADAME MARGOT, by John Bennett (*Century Co.*)  
 FINALITY, by David A. Curtis (*C. S. Simmerman*).  
 HOW AND WHY STORIES, by J. C. Branner (*Henry Holt & Co.*)  
 SONGS OF THE COWBOYS: *an Anthology*, by N. Howard Thorp (*Houghton, Mifflin Co.*).  
 HUSBANDS AND WIVES, by Arthur Belleville McCord (*St. Hubert Publishing Co., Chicago*)  
 SHADINGS: *A Book of Verse*, by Bessie Glen Buchanan (*privately printed*).  
 COLUMBINE TIME, by Will Irwin (*The Stratford Co.*)  
 A CITY IN THE FOREGROUND, by Gerard Hopkins (*E. P. Dutton Co.*)  
 CHILDREN OF GOD AND WINGED THINGS, by Anne Moore (*Four Seas Co.*)  
 OF ALL THINGS, by Robert Benchley (*Henry Holt & Co.*)

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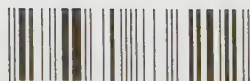
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